PNP pins bombings on Salamat, Murad

STORY BELOW, COLUMN 2

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PHILIPPINE DAILY
INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

SATURDAY, JANUARY 6, 2001 ★ 48 PAGES 4 SECTIONS VOL.16 NO. 29 P15

Davide gets death threat

SUPREME Court Chief Justice Hilario Davide yesterday read out a death threat sent to him for presiding over the impeachment trial of President Estrada.

He said the letter, written on stationery from the office of Vice President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, warned him: "We the Filipino people

DAVIDE/ A14

Dichaves summoned; George Go rebuked

TWO FRIENDS of President Estrada linked to his controversial "Jose Velarde" account in Equitable PCI Bank are finding themselves in a tight spot.

Businessman Jaime Dichaves was threatened by the Senate yesterday with contempt unless he answered accusations that he lied to cover up bank accounts that the President had allegedly

DICHAVES/ A14

LAUGHTER is the best revenge for the banished Rosanna Tuason-Fores and Bettina Aboitiz who are accorded seats of honor beside former President Cory Aquino at a protest and prayer rally for the bombing victims in Makati on Friday. MIKE ALQUINTO

MIRIAM
MAKAPILI

FINGERPOINTING is all the rage at protest rallies these days, thanks to Senator-Judge Miriam Defensor-Santiago. ERNIE U. SARMIENTO

'Loi got ₱8M from Chavit'

First Lady reiterates denial of receiving illegal money

By Rocky Nazareno, Martin P. Marfil and Juliet L. Javellana

FIRST Lady Luisa "Loi" Ejercito received two checks totaling P8.4 million from Ilocos Sur Gov. Luis "Chavit" Singson in 1999. The money, according to the prosecutors in the impeachment trial of President Estrada, was not reflected in the joint statement of assets and liabilities that she and President Estrada had declared.

The prosecutors submitted last night photocopies of documents on the undeclared income of the First Lady.

Prosecutors said the P8.4 million was deposited in the account of the First Lady at the Citibank branch in Greenhills, San Juan.

"It is up to the First Lady to explain what the money is for. Definitely, it was not included in the statement of assets and liabilities that she and the President had filed," Prosecutor-Rep. Joker Arroyo said.

"Where did the money come from, it will be known on Monday," Arroyo said.

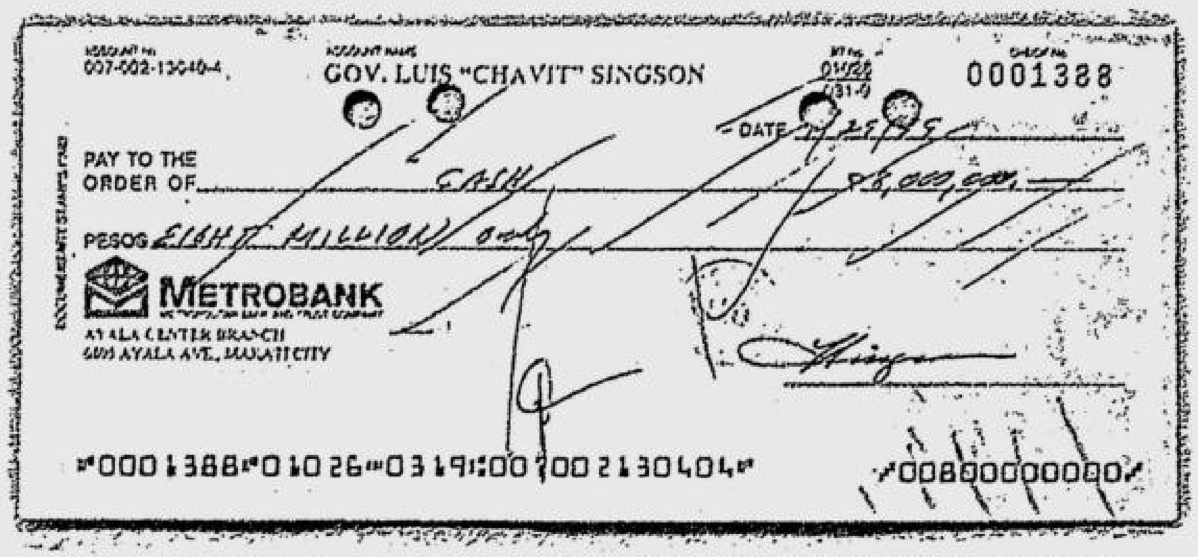
The First Lady reiterated her Oct. 14 statement on TV that she never received any money from Singson.

"What I received from Singson was a small digital video equipment when we were on a medical mission in Vigan," Ejercito said in a public address on TV shortly after Singson had claimed that the First Lady received P20 million of the excise tax allegedly pocketed by her husband.

"If this cost P20 million I will return it to him. But I heard that this kind of appliance comes cheap in his province," the First Lady added, alluding to rampant smuggling in Ilocos Sur.

LOI/ A14

DAY 16



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CHECK links the First Lady to Singson; on the dorsal side is her account number at Citibank Greenhills.

Movement of Landbank funds traced

By Raul J. Palabrica

ANALYSIS

THE MOVEMENT of P170 million at various branches of Landbank—from Malacañang to Vigan, Ilocos Sur, to Shaw Boulevard—was the focus of the impeachment trial of President Estrada.

Prosecutor Rep. Oscar Moreno guided Elizabeth Balagot, manager of the Landbank Vigan branch in 1998, in tracing the flow of part of the excise tax released to Ilocos Sur that Gov. Luis Singson claimed found its way to the President's pockets.

Delia Rajas, Alma Alfaro, Eleuterio Tan and Lucio Saberio were pointed to as the people in whose names were deposited or drawn various checks amounting to P170 million by Landbank's Vigan branch.

Balagot's testimony is clearly

MOVEMENT/ A14

Miriam conciliatory but protests continue

By Martin P. Marfil

THE BROUHAHA over proper behavior in an impeachment trial appears to be heading for a resolution after Sen. Miriam Defensor-Santiago backtracked and withdrew her motion to ban three spectators from the hearings.

But the case against Santiago was not easily ended, however, as protests against the senator's outburst echoed within the impeachment court, the streets and all the way to Mindanao.

Santiago informed the impeachment court that she had decided to withdraw the contempt case against Bettina Aboitiz, Rosanna Tuason-Fores and anti-crime advocate Dante Jimenez, a complainant in the impeachment case, after being told that the three were willing to publicly apologize.

MIRIAM/ A14

Mendoza, Joker: So alike yet so different

By Rocky Nazareno

THEY have many things in common, but they differ like water and oil.

Prosecutor-Rep. Joker Arroyo and defense lawyer Estelito Mendoza have crossed swords more than once before, and are doing so again in what is certainly the greatest case of their legal careers—the impeachment trial of President Estrada.

To think that many things bind them, including membership in the fraternity Upsilon Sigma Phi. They are also both members of batch 1952 of the University of the Philippines College of Law.

(The list of the legal and political luminaries from that batch is long. It includes former Vice President Salvador Laurel, former Supreme Court Justices Florida Ruth Romero and Hugo Gutierrez,

MENDOZA/ A14

PNP pins bombings on MILF

Salamat, Murad et al. charged

By Michael Lim Ubac and TJ Burgonio

ON THE basis of a document found in a captured rebel camp, the Philippine National Police yesterday pinned the Bloody Saturday bombings in Metro Manila on the Moro Islamic Liberation Front.

Police officials recommended the filing of multiple murder and frustrated murder charges against seven MILF members, including chair Hashim Salamat, and vice chairs Ghadzali Jaafar, Al-Haj Murad and Aleem Aziz Mimbantas.

A police official claimed that the document showed that the MILF was planning to bomb "malls, (the) LRT, water districts, provincial trains, one big school, 15 to 20 cinemas, Edsa, a Makati apartment or hotel, one university, and vessels."

Also implicated were MILF members Ismael Abbas, who was arrested earlier this week, Safilla Unos and Mohan Guindolongan.

The PNP-Criminal Investigation and Detection Group (CIDG) recommended that the Department of Justice file the charges against the seven. Only Abbas is in police custody.

Although MILF officials could not be contacted for comment, the group's spokesperson has already flatly denied responsibility for the five blasts that killed at least 18 people and injured around 100 others with powerful TNT charges.

PNP/ A13

Ping peeved by AFP raid

PHILIPPINE National Police Chief Panfilo Lacson chided the military yesterday for its raid on a Muslim community in Quezon City, saying it not only failed to nab suspects but may have driven the culprits behind the Dec. 30 bombing spree further into hiding.

Military intelligence chief Gen. Jose Calimlim retorted later that Lacson's statement was "an effort to sow discord

PING/ A13

Military frees 20, says 'sorry'

By Alcuin Papa and Philip C. Tubeza

"WE are sorry for the inconvenience."

Gen. Angelo Reyes, Armed Forces chief of staff, made the apology yesterday at a press conference as he announced the release of 14 of 18 suspects arrested Thursday in the Muslim community of Barangay Culiat in Quezon City.

Task Force Mindanao later reported that 20 had been arrested, adding that 16 were freed yesterday afternoon and that the rest were released at 9 p.m.

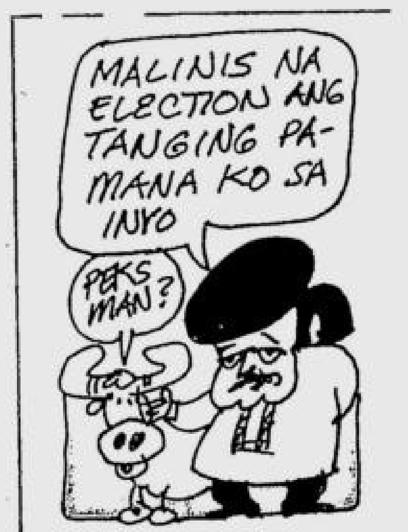
The released men and their lawyers said a simple sorry was not enough to make up for their ordeal in detention, and indicated that they may take legal action against the military.

"We will not accept their apology. We were abducted even when we had nothing to do with the bombings," said an angry Frederick Punzalan, one of those released.

But Reyes denied that the arrests had anything to do with the Bloody Saturday bomb attacks on Dec. 30 that killed at least 18 (22 by one count) and injured more than 100 others. He said that the raid on a house shared by the suspects was merely part of the military's campaign against the illegal possession of firearms.

Punzalan, however, said that military interrogators bombarded them with questions and tried to make them confess that they were involved in the bombings.

MILITARY/ A13



MALINIS NA ELECTION ANG TANGING PA-MANA KO SA INYO
PEKS MAN?

Erap wants legacy of clean polls

By Donna S. Cueto and Gerald G. Lacuarta

IMPEACHED President Estrada wants to leave a "legacy" of clean and automated elections, and he wants to start in May.

Tough for the President, but lack of time and legal

ERAP/ A14

Second FRONT PAGE

TANGING DIYOS NA LANG ANG PAG-ASA !

Pontiff leads closing rites for Jubilee Year

THE GREAT Jubilee of the Year 2000 draws to a close today, Jan. 6, the Feast of the Epiphany, with solemn rites to be presided over by Pope John Paul II at the Vatican.

The ceremony will be highlighted by the closing of the Holy Doors at St. Peter's Basilica and the other patriarchal basilicas, namely, St. John Lateran, St. Paul Outside-the-Walls and St. Mary Major.

Churches throughout the world, including the Philippines, will hold similar rites to cap the Jubilee Year celebration.

In Manila, Archbishop Jaime Cardinal Sin will officiate at a Eucharistic celebration tomorrow, Jan. 7, at the Manila Cathedral in Intramuros at 5:30 p.m.

It will be recalled that on Christmas Eve 1999, the Pope led in the traditional opening of the Holy Door at St. Peter's, ushering in the Holy Year marking the 2000th birth anniversary of Jesus Christ.

For Catholics all over the world, the Jubilee Year was a time for spiritual renewal and conversion.

The renewal focused on the following points: recall of debt, release of prisoners, restoration of harmony between men and women, return to land and rest of the earth.

According to the Vatican document titled, "The Holy Door Closes, but the Year of Grace Continues," "the Great Jubilee of the Year 2000 draws to a close, but the year of grace proclaimed by the Lord Jesus in the synagogue of Nazareth continues in the yearly cycle by which the Church celebrates the Liturgy of the saving work of the Lord as she awaits in the joyful hope for his return in glory."

The Vatican rites will be shown on television via satellite, with the Philippines receiving its live feed today from 7 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. on PTV-4.

Sin admits to feeling 'hopeless' over crises

By Norman Bordadora

MANILA Archbishop Jaime Cardinal Sin yesterday confessed to feelings of hopelessness over the national situation as he accused the Estrada government of not only failing to set a high moral tone for the country but also in protecting its citizens from terrorist attacks and heinous crimes.

In his strongest statement yet against President Estrada since the Dec. 30 bombings, the Cardinal said that were it not for his faith in God, he would have given up hope for the country "a long time ago."

"If the President cannot give us an example of moral leadership, if the police and the military cannot protect innocent citizens from terrorist attacks in the middle of the city, if our Cabinet secretaries cannot appreciate overwhelming evidence that the President is corrupt and they continue to support him, where else can we turn?" Sin asked in his statement.

The Cardinal had earlier asked all churches in the Archdiocese of Manila to offer all masses, from Jan. 1 to Jan. 9, for the souls of those who died in the series of bombings on Saturday.

He also asked that prayers be said for the conversion of the perpetrators of the attack, that they may find it in their hearts to surrender.

"Let us turn to the Lord and beg him to heal our land. Let us turn to Mary and beg her to bring peace to our land. Were it not for my faith in God, I would have fallen into despair a long time ago. Our hope is in the Lord," Sin said.

The archbishop said he was also offering a personal novena for the families of the victims.

Aside from lamenting the deaths of 18 persons, including many children, in the Dec. 30 bombings, Sin also mentioned the killing of Fr. Benjamin Inocencio in Jolo, Sulu, and the abduction of public relations man Bubby Dacer in November.

"If the government cannot help us find the killers of Fr. Benjamin Inocencio of Jolo and the abductors of Bubby Dacer, to whom shall we turn?" Sin asked.

"This government has not only lost its moral ascendancy to govern. It seems like this government cannot even give us private citizens the peace and order that public servants owe the citizenry," the Cardinal said.

Sin's latest criticism of the President came in the wake of a statement made by the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines calling for calm, sobriety and an end to the casting of blame in the crises gripping the country.

The CBCP, however, likewise called on the police and the military to quickly solve the spate of bombings and bring the perpetrators to justice. The CBCP also warned against any coverup should the suspects be found to be members of government forces.

"Given the heinousness of the crimes, there should be swift justice," said CBCP media director Msgr. Hernando Coronel.

Angara takes post, downplays rivalry

By Cynthia Balana

INCOMING Executive Secretary Edgardo Angara yesterday downplayed speculation about the emergence of two power blocs in Malacañang following his assumption of his new post today.

In a press conference, Angara said he will try his best to maintain harmony in Malacañang despite the presence there of his one-time political nemesis, presidential spokesman Ernesto Maceda.

Angara succeeds Ronaldo Zamora who resigned to prepare for his congressional campaign in San Juan, Metro Manila.

Angara and Maceda both held the post of Senate president at different times during the Ramos administration. Both led Senate coups against each other during their terms.

Angara said he accepted his new post on condition that his duties and responsibilities were clearly defined.

"I made sure there will be no room for ambiguity so there will never be a power play or a misunderstanding." Angara said in response to the question of a power play.

On his relationship with Maceda, Angara said, "There is no rift between us. There will never be a power struggle. This is the least the President needs at this time.

"I believe I can serve the country in a larger capacity, assist in stabilizing the political situation and help expedite the programs of President Estrada," Angara answered when asked why he agreed to become the "little President."

Besides, Angara said, it was difficult to decline the invitation of the President.

He said his decision to accept the job came despite pressure from some Cabinet members to resign and abandon Mr. Estrada.

Admitting that he and the President were not really good friends, Angara said he decided to stand by the Chief Executive because he (Angara) was the leader of the Laban ng Demokratikong Pilipino (LDP) which had chosen to remain in the coalition with the President's party.

"My decision to stay in the administration was not solely personal," Angara said.

"I had to think of my party and its members. It was the decision of the party to support the President, especially now that the impeachment trial is ongoing," he said.

Angara also said he was happy that the President followed his recommendation and appointed Undersecretary Domingo Panganiban as the new secretary of agriculture.

Angara said he wanted Panganiban to succeed him in order to have "continuity" in the department.

Panganiban is a career official who started as an agri-technician in Marawi City. Angara described him as someone who knows the "ins and outs" of the department.

Both Angara and Panganiban will take their oaths of office before the President at 10 a.m. today at Malacañang.

DECS keeps eye on science funds

By Blanche Rivera

FOLLOWING last year's controversial purchase of luxury vehicles with a donation intended for office equipment, Education Secretary Andrew Gonzalez yesterday warned science high school officials throughout the country not to spend their new allocations on things "other than those needed."

Gonzalez issued the warning after the Department of Education, Culture and Sports released P32 million for the improvement of the 16 regional science high schools nationwide.

Science high schools in each region would get P2 million each as "financial assistance to augment" their maintenance and other operating expenses, Gonzalez said in a statement yesterday.

"No expenditure for equipment shall be made other than those needed in the math and science classes," Gonzalez added.

He said 70 percent of each P2 million budget, or P1.4 million, should go toward the purchase of computers and printers not exceeding five units, along with math and science equipment such as laboratory apparatus.

For the repair and maintenance of the computers and laboratory tools, DECS mandated that 7.5 percent of the P2 million, or P150,000, should be set aside.

Another 10 percent, or P200,000, should be used to acquire instructional materials such as professional magazines, books and compact discs which may not be included in the list of approved books for the two subjects.

DECS also stipulated that five percent, or P100,000, should be spent on training for teachers and principals of the science schools, while another 7.5 percent, or P150,000, should go to subsidies for student researchers or other "valid" school projects.

The money for the science high schools was deposited with the Veterans Bank late last year, with at least P1 million for each school ready for release, according to DECS.

Secret witness fails to appear

A CERTAIN "P.O. Mendoza" was the secret witness and police officer who was set to confirm the bugging of the telephones of persons involved in the impeachment trial of President Estrada but he was a no-show before the Senate court yesterday.

In fact, none of yesterday's other scheduled witnesses—Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. president Manuel Pangilinan, PLDT employee Flodina Pasamba and Intelligence Service of the Armed Forces chief Gen. Jose Calimlim—showed up to take the stand.

The no-shows forced the impeachment court to declare a recess of the special hearing into an INQUIRER report that Presidential Anti-Organized Crime Task Force agents had been monitoring the telephone calls of some 100 persons, most of whom were involved in the impeachment trial of the President.

Senate Secretary Lutgardo Barbo assured the court that the witnesses, except for Mendoza, were aware of a "continuing notice" to be available for the hearings.

The court has held six hearings on the case so far. *Juliet Javellana*

Ramiro dies at 62

REP. HILARION Ramiro Jr., health secretary during the Ramos administration, died yesterday at the age of 62.

Ramiro suffered cardiac arrest and was pronounced dead at St. Luke's Hospital in Quezon City at around 2 a.m., according to his aide, Greg Matugas.

He is survived by his wife, former Rep. Herminia de Mesa Ramiro, and son, Gerard Hilarion.

His remains lie at the Mount Carmel Chapel in New Manila, QC, not far from the Ramiro residence on Sunrise Hill St. Matugas said the body will be flown to Ozamiz City tomorrow, where interment is tentatively set for Jan. 11. *Volt Contreras and Merpu P. Roa, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

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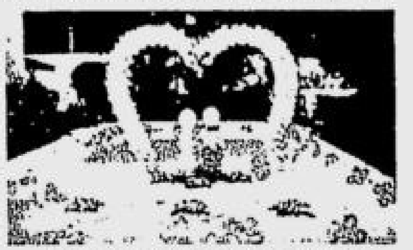
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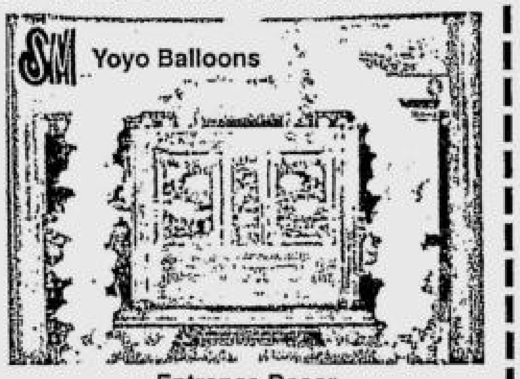

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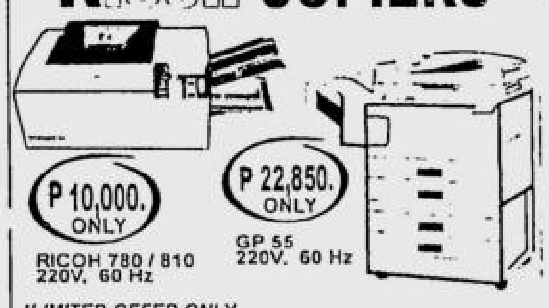

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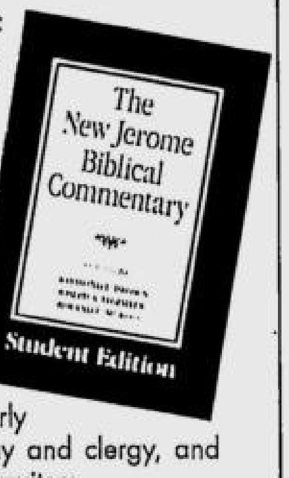

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U.P. COLLEGE OF LAW MARKS ITS 90th YEAR

The University of the Philippines College of Law will celebrate its 90th Founding Anniversary, with Supreme Court Chief Justice Hilario G. Davide, Jr. as Guest Speaker. The affair will be held on Friday, 12 January 2001, 8 o'clock a.m., at Malcolm Theater, U.P. College of Law, Diliman, Quezon City. With Dean Raul C. Pangalangan opening the event assisted by Associate Dean Myrna S. Feliciano, greetings will be delivered by U.P. President Francisco Nemenzo and U.P. Diliman Chancellor Emerlinda R. Roman.

For this occasion, the U.P. College of Law will launch two publications: *Impeachment Q & A (a primer on the Impeachment Trial)* and the *CLE Journal*. Forthcoming publications are:

1) Justice Jose B.L. Reyes' Comments on the Civil Code
2) Legislative History of the Family Code
3) Dean Jorge R. Bocobo on the Civil Code
4) Constitutional Commission Journal and Records, Comprehensive Index
5) Professor Perfecto V. Fernandez' Collected Writings

The College will host a Roundtable Discussion to be highlighted with a forum on the Supreme Court ruling in *Serrano vs. NLRC and Isetann* and the professorial chair lecture of Professor Patricia R.P. Salvador Daway.

Finally, the College will honor all U.P. Law alumni who have served as Chief Justice and Associate Justice of the Supreme Court of the Philippines.

GMA hits black prop, urges non-violence

By Christine Avendaño

VICE PRESIDENT Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo said yesterday that there was no let-up in the black propaganda being waged against her by the Estrada administration, citing the emergence of a new tabloid that she said was "pretending" to be part of the legitimate press.

"I must be truly important for them to continue beating me up with black propaganda," Macapagal told reporters.

She was reacting to the emergence of a new tabloid "Pinoy Exposé," which hit the streets of Metro Manila last Wednesday with articles critical of Macapagal and Ilocos Sur Gov. Luis "Chavit" Singson, the main accuser of President Estrada in the ongoing impeachment trial.

Also yesterday, Macapagal urged groups calling for the resignation of President Estrada not to be scared away by the wave of bombings that rocked Metro Manila last Dec. 30.

"The reason (for the bombings) was to sow fear and hysteria among ordinary citizens," Macapagal told multi-sectoral groups and the political opposition gathered at Ayala Avenue in Makati City for a rally expressing indignation over the bombings that killed 18 people.

She reminded them to observe a "non-violent struggle," saying that retaliating with violence would only lead to more violence.

The article in the "Pinoy Expose" tabloid against Macapagal was headlined GMA-"Gahamang Maupo Agad" (Greedy for Power).

The story depicted the vice president as a power-hungry politician who initially posed as a nationalist economist and took a stand against the Import Liberalization Law.

"I tell myself that it's only my reputation that they're trying to destroy, unlike Ninoy Aquino whose detractors took his life," Macapagal said.

'Let blood of victims unite nation'

By TJ Burgonio

"LET THE BLOOD of the victims unite the nation against Mr. Estrada."

This message filled the air as some 2,000 ralliers, both rich and poor, gathered in Makati City yesterday afternoon to express grief as well as pray for the persons who were killed in the series of bombings in Metro Manila Dec. 30.

Under cloudy skies and the fluttering streamers of various militant organizations, the ralliers offered white roses and candles before an image of the Virgin Mary on a makeshift stage at the corner of Ayala Avenue and Paseo de Roxas.

A group of artists, Teatro Katotohanan, performed a 30-minute drama that highlighted the bombings and offered songs, dances and prayers for each of the blast victims.

At the rally, dubbed "Luksa ng Bayan Gawing Lukso ng Kagitingan," the ralliers took turns condemning the bombings and accusing President Estrada of involvement. They also urged the people to turn their grief into courage to bring the perpetrators of the bombings to justice.

"Let the blood of the Dec. 30 victims unite the nation against Erap. We should not let this pass without letting him (Mr. Estrada) pay dearly for it," Pastor Saycon of the Council of Philippine Officials said, as he held up an INQUIRER issue showing the smiling photo of 6-year-old girl Crizel Acusin.

Acusin, the daughter of a Manila policeman, was one of the blast victims. The photo of her bloodied and torn body appeared on the front page of the INQUIRER the day after the bombings.

Manny Sarmiento of Kilusang Mayo Uno said the bombings were a desperate attempt of Mr. Estrada to divert attention from his ongoing impeachment trial at the Senate.

Like Saycon, Sarmiento said the people should keep pressing for the resignation of the President.

Amirah Ali Lidasan of the Moro Christian People's Alliance denounced the President, the police and the military for randomly picking up Muslims in cases of bombings in the metropolis.

"Why do they have to use Muslims to salvage his rotten image and save the fall of his administration? He has never been pro-poor Muslim. Since May 27 up to now, he has done nothing but kill, arrest and jail innocent Moros," Lidasan said of Mr. Estrada.

The rally was attended by Vice President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, former President Corazon Aquino and other prominent personalities such as former BIR commissioner Liwayway Vinzons Chato and former Cabinet secretary Josefina Lichauco.

The rally ended with the singing of Bayan Ko' at around 5 p.m. It was attended by members of Kompil II, Bayan, Courage, the Erap Resign Movement, the Makati Business Club, Gabriela, Bigkis-Pinoy, among other organizations.

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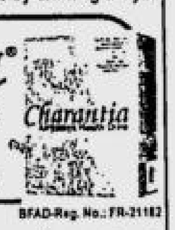

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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

Vol. 16 No. 29
ISSN 0116-2642

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The PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER, INC. has its business and editorial offices at Chino Roces Avenue (formerly Pasong Tamo) corner Yague and Mascardo Streets, Makati • P.O. Box 2353 Makati Central Post Office, 1263 Makati City, Philippines • Our new telephone numbers are 897-8808 connecting all departments: Editorial Fax 897-4793, 897-4794; Advertising 897-4807; Circulation 527-33-42, 527-33-48, 528-01-83, 528-01-86 and 528-02-13, Fax: 528-02-34.

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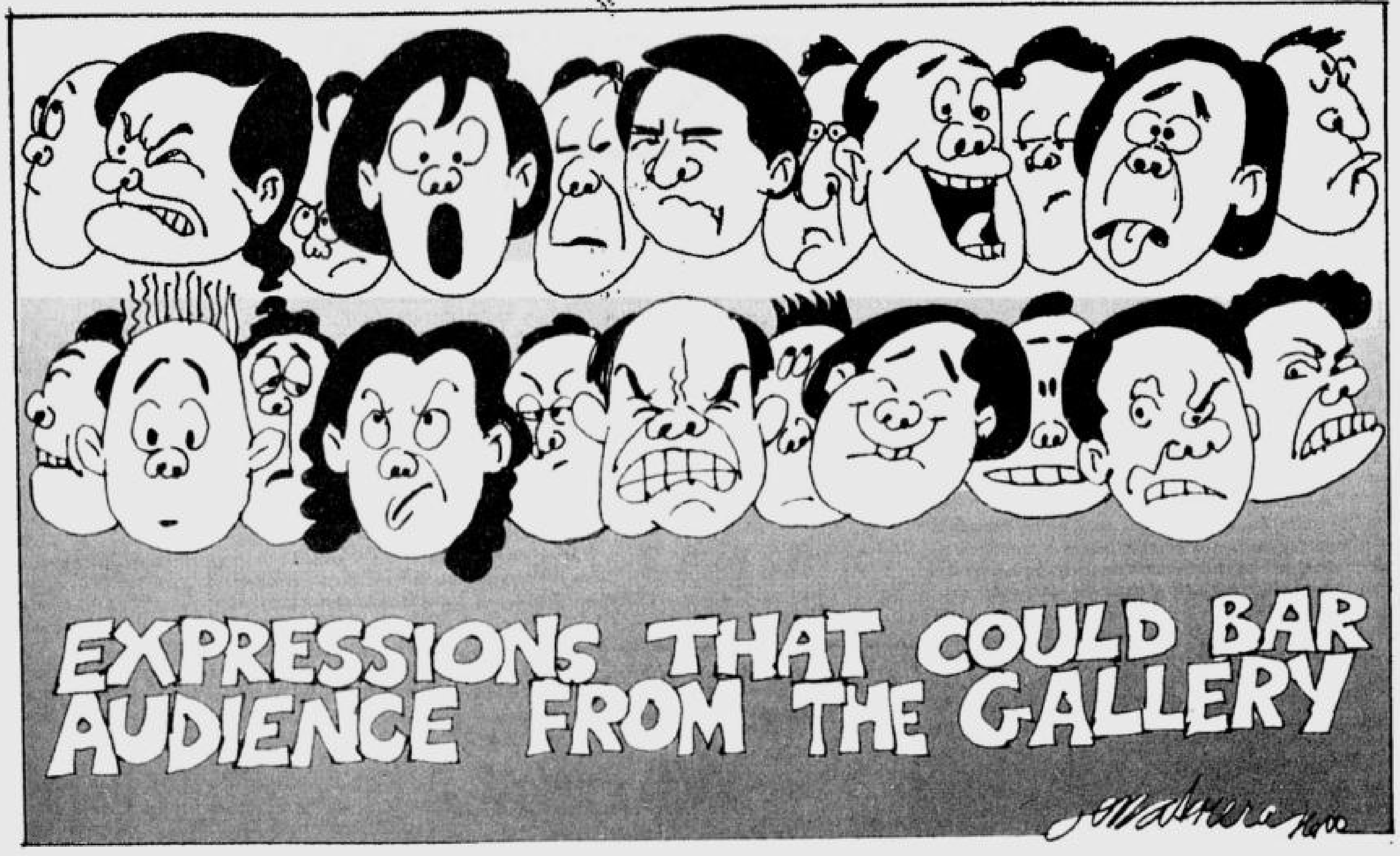

EXPRESSIONS THAT COULD BAR AUDIENCE FROM THE GALLERY
Jess Abrera 2000

EDITORIALS

Deadly race

THE INVESTIGATION of the Dec. 30 bombings is supposed to be the responsibility of the Philippine National Police. But, surprisingly, the Intelligence Service of the Armed Forces has seized the lead role. Intelligence agents raided, Gestapo-style, a Muslim community in Quezon City on Thursday, and arrested 17 Muslims they implicated in the bombings.

If the bombing is a police problem, we can't understand why it was the military agents who staged the raids and produced the suspects ahead of the promise of PNP Director General Panfilo Lacson that "we'll get those bastards" within two days. Rather than the PNP announcing the arrests, the military intelligence agents beat the police to it.

The rounding up of suspects got off to a messy and nasty start. The military agents, wearing black uniforms and with drawn guns, stormed into houses, causing fear among the startled homeowners. Some wives of the men who were arrested said the agents planted grenades and weapons in their homes. A Muslim commissioner of the Human Rights Commission in charge of Muslim affairs denounced the raids as illegal, and said they breached legal procedures. Curiously, Lacson said that the bombings were not linked to the impeachment trial of President Estrada, and put the onus on the Muslims.

The PNP and the military intelligence unit appear to be engaged in a race to crack the case first, with each having a separate theory of the bombings.

Since the first hours of the bombings, the law enforcement authorities have stumbled on false leads which do not augur well for an investigation free from suspicion of being an exercise aimed at looking for scapegoats.

Reckless direction

ONE of the first suspects held by the police on Dec. 30 was an 11-year-old boy, Emil Michael Vincent Ventura, a fifth grade pupil and son of retired PNP Director Diony Ventura. He was held for more than 12 hours for questioning on suspicion he had something to do with the explosion near Dusit Hotel. On the basis of sheer suspicion, the boy was detained, grilled and not allowed to call his parents. Ambassador Ernesto Maceda, who is serving as Mr. Estrada's spokesperson for the impeachment trial, gave the detention a political color. Based on the information that the boy's father was an administrative officer assigned to Gen. Fidel V. Ramos when the latter was chief of Philippine Constabulary in 1984, Maceda accused Ventura of possible involvement in the bombing. Maceda thus transformed himself into a reckless character assassin in his effort to defend his client. Without a shred of evidence, he blamed, with appalling irreponsibility, the legal opposition for the bombing within hours of the blast.

Although the Ventura boy has been released from police custody, the detention proved to be a nightmare that has left traumatic scars. The detention has also highlighted the reckless direction of the police investigation.

The investigators subjected him to the kind of pressure grilling they usually apply on hoodlums. Their bullying method has provoked a strong reaction from Human Rights Commission Chair Aurora Recina who ordered an investigation into possible violations of the boy's human rights. Ventura's lawyer was preparing charges against the boy's interrogators, including Metro Manila Development Authority Chair Jejomar Binay and senior PNP officers for illegal arrest and detention and violation of the child's rights.

The boy's detention is a manifestation of the panic reaction of law enforcement authorities who are torn between conducting an independent investigation and producing a theory that will shift the focus of suspicion for responsibility from the administration. In that predicament, it is not hard to explain why they pounced on a child who is vulnerable to intimidation under pressure.

In view of the results so far produced by the authorities—including the raid of the military intelligence agents on the Muslim community in Quezon City—the public has a reason to fear that the investigations may be leading to a frame-up.

Wayward words

SEPARATE OPINION

Isagani A. Cruz

A COUSIN of mine, Dr. Oscar M. Alfonso of UP wrote to correct my use of the word "staunch" to stop a hemorrhage. He said I should have written "stanch," and I agreed. "Staunch" is an adjective meaning "steadfast, loyal." "Stanch" is a verb meaning "to stop the flow of."

On second thought, however, I may not have been wrong at all. I find that Webster describes "stanch" and "staunch" as synonyms meaning "steadfast, loyal" or "stop the flow of." You can use "staunch" or "stanch" to stop a hemorrhage and be right either way.

It's like the pronunciation of "herb," which had intrigued me for some time. Some people say "herb" with the *h*, as in "help," while others omit that letter and say "erb," like the Pampangos and the Cockneys. I finally consulted the dictionary and found both pronunciations to be acceptable. The preferred sound, though, is "urb."

"Stabilize" is another interesting word. Its common pronunciation in this country is "STAB-ilize," following the Pilipino or Spanish *a*, as in "araw" "or "habla." This is not a wrong pronunciation, but the preferred one is "STAY-bilize," with the English long *a* as in "way." Very few of us pronounce it that way.

Then there is "Yuletide season," which many people, including some writers and well-wishers, used last month. This has never ceased to amuse me. It's a redundancy; or, as Sen. Miriam Defensor-Santiago would put it, "redundant, superfluous and tautological." That's also overstating it.

"Tide" means "season," so that when you use "Yuletide season" you are saying "Yule season season." That's really redundant, superfluous, tautological and also absurd. "Sira-sira" is repetitious, but that is an accepted nuance of Pilipino and other local dialects. It's synonymous with "luka-luka" or brain-damaged.

I'm an old campaigner against "at this point in time," as some readers of this column may have noticed. I hate that phrase because it's too pretentious, besides being outdated. It's a hangover from the Watergate days, where the Nixon boys vulgarized it and many local imitators were impressed. I was delighted when a fellow columnist recently criticized its use by a TV anchorman still living in the '70s.

Is there perhaps an attempt to distinguish "at this point in time" from "at this point in space"? Sir, your affectation is showing. TV and radio announcers could profit much from a seminar on vocabulary and phonics and Modern English usage. There they should slay that execrable phrase and kill it dead, never to rise again.

Perhaps Sen. Rodolfo Biazon should also attend that seminar. At the resumption of the impeachment trial last week, he used "at this point in time" no less than five times during his two-minute allotment. He's so enamored of that cliché. Sen. John Osmeña also used that phrase and at first correctly pronounced "triple" but later made it "tryple."

It's "TRIPLE" not "TRY-ple." The prosecution panel doggedly tries to correct the mispronunciation, but its attempts are always overruled. But I say, try, try again, gentlemen, and TRYPLE will eventually become TRIPLE.

It was at this same hearing that the Senate wasted several valuable minutes over Biazon's use of the phrase "legal gobbledygook." Sen. Francisco Tatad wanted to expunge it from the record as unparliamentary language. Up rose Sen. Raul Roco to defend it, and up rose Sen. Juan Ponce Enrile to defend Tatad. Meanwhile, the trial of the President was on hold.

Someone should have requested a halt to the triviality on the ground that it was irrelevant and immaterial to the serious issue at hand. But a request for that purpose was never made even by the defense panel. At any rate, the two preceding sentences illustrate the use of "request" without the "for" and "request for."

"Request" when used as a transitive verb does not need a preposition. You do not request for a reply; you just request it, without the "for." It is when you use "request" as a noun that the preposition "for" is needed, as when you make a request for a reply. The verb here is "make" and "request" as its object is the noun.

And it's "Com-MIT-tee," not "COM-mittee." "COM-ity" is when you're talking of politeness, usually among nations.

An idiosyncrasy of our culture is the passion for titles and other honorifics. We're not content to be addressed as Mr. or Mrs. or Miss but must be identified by our professions or distinctions. These should set us apart from the *hoi polloi*, with which many of us would rather not mingle.

In the current impeachment trial, Chief Justice Hilario Davide Jr. is careful to refer to the members of the Senate as "the Honorable Senator-Judge So-and-So." "Senator" should do, and "Honorable" may not even be accurate. It's a good thing the senator-judges discarded the wearing of rented togas, which ill-fit many of them. And I'm not talking of measurements.

Lawyers are addressed by the judge as "Attorney" unlike in American courts where they are simply called Mr. or Ms. Ally is not addressed as Atty. McBeal but plain Miss McBeal. But in this country, it's Architect Ledesma and Pharmacist Santos and Socialite Arenas, and "Call Me Madame," if you please. Sometimes we even use Don, as in Don Emilio of the Bulletin and Don Sulpicio of the shipping line.

Even obituaries here carry the title of the deceased, like Engineer Difunto L. Muerto or Maldita Erudita, Ph.D. They probably expect to also practice in the other life, to confound the college dropouts and the illiterates with their diplomas.

Coming back to the impeachment trial, it's "TES-timony," not "tes-TI-mony." Justice Alejo Labrador, my professor in Evidence, automatically gave a "5" to any student who mispronounced that word. Lawyers, more than all others, should know its correct pronunciation. Even if it be immaterial and irrelevant, we must at least pronounce it correctly.

Paranoia

GET REAL

Solita Collas-Monsod

WHAT do Joseph Estrada, a.k.a. Jose Velarde, and Miriam Defensor-Santiago have in common? Well, yes, Estrada is godfather to Santiago's daughters. And yes, Santiago's siblings and husband are all well-placed in the Estrada administration. And yes, Estrada is reportedly helping Santiago in her bid to be part of a new United Nations court to try international crimes. And, yes, Santiago does show her partiality for him.

So they do have many things in common, although truth to tell, this commonality only started after Estrada became President. Previous to that, his gambling and drinking and womanizing did not escape her sharp eye and even sharper tongue. But lately, there seems to be an addition to the list of things they have in common: both are showing increasing signs of paranoia.

Whether the paranoia is merely an act, or whether it reflects a real mental disorder one is not sure. But the description of a paranoiac—someone with "systematized delusions and the projection of personal conflicts, which are ascribed to the supposed hostility of others"—seems to fit their more recent behavior.

Take Mr. Estrada. One cannot help but notice the increased stridency with which he has been pursuing his "rich versus poor" version of why he is being impeached. He has even added more details to his story, providing a name and a face to the so-called Makati elite which he claims to have conspired to remove him from office—not because he has shown himself to be unfit, you understand, but because he is pro-poor. The name is the Makati Business Club and the face is that of Ricardo "Dick" Romulo, who, if the President is to be believed, is almost the devil incarnate.

The story, before Estrada twisted it beyond recognition, is rather straightforward. George Go, an alleged Estrada crony and somehow tainted from the fallout of the stock-market scandal, was becoming too much of a liability to Equitable PCI Bank. His vulnerability to pressure, plus the fact that the bad odor of the administration was rubbing off on him (remember his being treasurer of that Erap Muslim Youth Foundation?) was wreaking havoc on the bank's financial status. It was therefore imperative (and he himself recognized it) that the bank sever its (public) ties with him.

Who to put in his place? The unanimous choice of the Go family and the other shareholders, including the SSS and GSIS, was Romulo, who has been vice chair and director of Equitable for over 25 years. Before him, his father, Carlos P. Romulo, also served as director, and was in fact chair, until his government position (foreign minister under Marcos) required him to give it up..

Why choose Romulo, whose shares in the bank amount to less than one percent, as opposed to, say, a government nominee, since the government is a major shareholder? Again, the answer is pretty straightforward. Romulo had what the bank needed: an unassailable reputation for integrity. He doesn't have a dishonest bone in his body, and will not condone any hanky-panky, as the business community knows.

Nothing sinister to the story. But after Estrada got through with it, Romulo and his Makati Business Club (he has been chair for 11 years, again because of nothing else but his reputation for integrity) conspired—I'm sure Estrada would have used "with malice aforethought," but he is unfamiliar with the term—to take over the chairmanship of Equitable PCI Bank with the evil intent of bringing Estrada down and, most likely, in the process force Clarissa Ocampo to give her damning testimony. How about that for paranoia, real or put-on?

That Romulo has less than one percent of the shares of Equitable PCI Bank, that he did not know about Ocampo until he was made chair and given the proper briefing are immaterial and irrelevant, as far as Estrada's version is concerned. Note how everything that is unfavorable to the man is being labeled as immaterial and irrelevant.

Now for Santiago. Actually, one cannot really be surprised that she threw a temper tantrum last Thursday. After all, she has a reputation for sometimes flying into fits of anger at the slightest provocation (people say she loves to dish it out, but she has difficulty taking it).

Truth to tell, these antics were amusing once upon a time, after one's initial reaction of dismay. One still smiles when remembering the "fungus-faced" incident, as well as the time she accused Sen. Raul Roco of trying to seduce her (he has an eye tic, but she thought he was lewdly winking at her).

Lately though, it is becoming increasingly difficult to see any humor in them. There was certainly nothing funny in what she did on Thursday. I have always defended her vigorously when people would call her "Brenda" (snickering while doing so), but I confess to a diminished, if not totally extinct, enthusiasm to do so now.

The objects of her ire last Thursday, Rosanna Fores and Bettina Aboitiz, are about as well-behaved a pair of ladies as one can find, certainly far-removed from the browbeating, hysterical, fishwife types. They stood up and looked at her "provocatively"—that is Santiago's version of the episode. Their version is that they wanted to get a better view of the proceedings, and had to crane their necks, as there was a pillar in front of their seats.

But if one can become accustomed to the senator's tantrums, there is certainly no excuse for the way her colleagues appeared to have cravenly pandered to them. There is no excuse for their decision to banish Aboitiz and Fores, as well as Dante Jimenez, from the hall without hearing their side. That kind of behavior smacked of outraged royalty, with the three unfortunates being treated as if they were slaves.

The senators may need to be reminded that the Filipino people paid for that hall and pay for their salaries and emoluments. The senators are the servants of the people—not their masters.

So please get real, senators. And get off the high horse as well.

Oh, Miriam!

POLITICAL TIDBITS

Belinda Olivares-Cunanan

WHAT upsets the cause-oriented groups is that three spectators at the Senate impeachment trial—Dante Jimenez of the Volunteers Against Crime and Corruption, Bettina Aboitiz and Rosanna Tuazon Fores—were summarily banned from the Senate premises for the duration of the trial on the mere say-so of Sen. Miriam Defensor-Santiago and without due process. It is ironic that the Senate is hearing out the charges leveled against President Estrada in interminable rounds, and yet it imposed punishment—without the benefit of an investigation—on citizens who are merely exercising vigilance over the impeachment process. The three citizens were hustled out of the Senate in full view of the national and international media and taken to the office of the sergeant-at-arms in the basement, but there was no investigation. During a closed-door caucus, the senators apparently decided to give in to their colleague, although some of them must have thought it was unfair and a gross violation of the spectators' human rights. Santiago could have been mistaken about them, but it seems that nobody rose to defend the accused. There's a tinge of arrogance in the senators' rash behavior, but it would be good for the senators to remember that those taxpayers help pay their salaries.

* * *

The three citizens said they merely leaned forward to get a better look at the reaction of Santiago as Sen. Raul Roco expounded on the "idealism" of lawyers since a big post was blocking their view. But they denied that they stood up, and their statement was corroborated by other spectators. At that point, I suspect that there was a bit of a commotion emanating from the gallery in reaction to Santiago's harassment of 27-year-old lawyer Ma. Jasmin B. Banal, who was testifying for the prosecution on dummy corporations set up by the President's lawyer Edward Serapio. But Santiago, enraged by Roco's "colloquy," chose to point to some people in the gallery, "Makapili-style," as Sanlakas put it.

Watching her turn livid with rage, many people who were ardent fans of hers in the election of 1992 sighed with relief. *Mabuti na lang hindi siya ang nanalo,* they told themselves. Could it be that the Ilongga firebrand is cracking under the pressure of the trial?

* * *

The problem with Santiago is that she can be so generous in dishing out acid sarcasm and insults, but she cannot take even a slight affront to her overgrown ego. I was quite horrified at the way she humiliated the young lawyer at the witness stand and imputed ill motives when she learned that Banal had abandoned a higher-paying job for a lower-paying one. Santiago kept stressing that Banal's act was an "unusual deviation" from the "usual career path" of UP lawyers, which "taxes credulity." What she was obviously driving at was that Banal may have left the De Borja law office in order to be part of the demolition crew of the Romulo Mabanta law office against President Estrada, never mind if the salary in the latter office was lower. But Santiago was being intellectually dishonest when she didn't point out that Banal's decision to transfer to the second law firm was made more than two months before Gov. Luis "Chavit" Singson shocked the nation with his exposé.

* * *

I imagine that UP law alumni are now up in arms over their being branded as motivated solely by money. There are many of that variety indeed, and they are a shame to the UP College of Law. But to lump all UP law alumni together in this category is totally unfair to many who are motivated less by the thought of monetary gain than the privilege of serving in a noble profession. I can think immediately of so many UP law professors who make do with their poor pay instead of getting good jobs outside in the belief that, "The business of a law school is not to teach law, but to teach law in the grand manner," as the words emblazoned in the Malcolm Hall put it. I can think of so many UP lawyers who defend pro bono the poor and the oppressed. Among them are young lawyers serving as volunteers in the Albert Schweitzer Foundation, who defend street children involved in crimes arising from extreme poverty.

* * *

Sen. Raul Roco knew the risk he was taking when he expounded on the "idealism" of lawyers. My suspicion is that he took pity at Banal, a freshly scrubbed UP law graduate of Class '99, who belonged to the upper bracket of her class and took the bar in September of that year, after she was harassed and humiliated by Santiago. Jasmin is the daughter of Raul's classmate at San Beda, Quezon City councilor Jorge Banal. Even Chief Justice Hilario Davide Jr. must have felt a tinge of pity for her as he called her "*compañera*" twice.

Unfortunately, lawyers can't be disbarred for being obnoxious and boorish, can they?

* * *

Fr. David Clay, the spiritual director of Retrouvaille Philippines, a Catholic ministry whose weekend program is designed to help heal and renew deeply troubled marriages, is extending an invitation to President Estrada and First Lady Loi Ejercito to attend its first weekend seminar for the year 2001 on Friday, Jan. 12 up to Sunday, Jan. 14. It will be held at the Merciful Sisters Mother of Mercy Spiritual Center, SVD Road in Tagaytay City. Open to married couples whose marriage is badly battered by conflicts, disillusionment, pain and anger between spouses, Retrouvaille is aware that the President had expressed to Science Secretary Filemon Uriarte a desire to join the marriage encounter seminar of Couples for Christ, of which Uriarte is an elder.

Retrouvaille, however, believes that its weekend program is more suitable to the First Couple if they believe that their marriage needs healing due to so many hurts in their relationship, and if they are willing to try to put the past behind and work toward improving their relationship in a new and positive way. Father Clay of the Columban Fathers assures the First Couple that Retrouvaille can provide the much needed healing and reconciliation. He points out that its program as well as the identities of participating couples is held in the strictest confidence, known only to Father Clay and the three presenting couples, who themselves once had problems in their marriage.

* * *

Retrouvaille is specifically for marriages that face serious problems. Since it started in the country in 1991, it has had 36 seminars and has attracted many couples from Vigan to Davao. Weekend seminars have been scheduled every other month starting January. Inquiries may be relayed to Fr. Dave Clay at Tel. Nos. 523-3361 and 525-0308, or to Tom and Ruby del Castillo at 931-8413 and 932-3750 or Bien and Lex Salinas at 933-2783 and 0979-770-5860 and Tessie Reyes at 0917-5388970. All calls will be kept in strictest confidence.

Ms Miriam's tantrum

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

SHE can dish it out, but she can't take it. Often in the course of the impeachment trial, Sen. Miriam Defensor-Santiago has played "*pa*-cute" and not so subtly put down her colleagues in the chamber in the guise of asking questions of a witness. I remember most vividly the time she sought to "restore" the credibility of a witness, one of the Equitable PCI Bank managers. The manager had just been questioned by other senators about the propriety of Yolanda Ricaforte's multiple bank accounts, opened with minimal identification, not even a statement of consent from her husband. "Is there a law that says husband and wife should be handcuffed together and brought to a branch before they're allowed to open an account?" was just one "*pa*-cute" query of Santiago, if I remember it right.

The other day, she attempted to insinuate that witness Jasmin Banal is biased because Banal had left the law firm where presidential lawyer Edward Serapio is a partner to join the Romulo Mabanta law office whose principal is head of the Makati Business Club and perceived to be anti-Erap. But just as Santiago was to launch her theory, the wind was knocked out of her when Banal said she was getting paid less at her new firm than where she had come from. Unable to hide the sarcasm in her voice, Santiago then commented that this was certainly a "deviation" from the normal career path of a "UP law graduate." Her implication? That Banal was lying, of course.

When Sen. Raul Roco rose later to "question" Banal on her decision to leave a law firm for another even for lower pay, he made a pointed remark about how law is not just a trade or a career, but a "noble calling" based on "grand ideals."

* * *

STUNG, Santiago, invoking a question of decorum and privilege, rose ostensibly to denounce some members of the audience for misbehaving inside the impeachment hall.

But it was obvious it was Roco's riposte that really got Santiago's goat. And since she couldn't vent her ire on a colleague, she chose to punish three people in the gallery instead.

Still, Miriam's tantrum is puzzling. She had, after all, not only sought to besmirch the integrity of a young lawyer, she had also declared the entire legal community as a bunch of money-grubbing shysters. Shouldn't another lawyer have tried to salvage the image of his profession?

As for her claim that building upon another senator's questions will give rise to a "colloquy" between the two, I would think it was only self-restraint and respect for the court that prevented her previous targets from engaging in a tit-for-tat with her in her numerous attempts to show off and play cute.

So is it to be that Her Honor Ms Miriam can needle her colleagues, but none of them should have the nerve or the right to rebut her? As long as lawyers' groups are trying to get Estelito Mendoza disbarred, can't they load Senator Santiago into the same wagon, on the grounds of overweening arrogance and conceit, even for a lawyer?

* * *

ALSO unfortunate is the way the impeachment court has acted, unilaterally and without due process, in permanently banning the three members of the audience from the hall on Santiago's say-so.

Could Senate President Nene Pimentel have so forgotten his beginnings as a human rights lawyer that he failed to watch out for the spectators' basic right to observe the trial? Wasn't it particularly cruel, too, to have invited the two women back from the sergeant-of-arms' office, only so they could listen to Pimentel announce the senators' decision and order pages to escort them out of the hall, looking for all the world like criminals?

What was their offense? Slightly rising on their haunches and craning their necks to get a better look at the proceedings? Who is to judge whether the way they looked in Miriam's direction was offensive? Apparently, any senator could throw out a taxpayer on the slightest whim and attack of paranoia. What will the impeachment court ban next, people whose faces or figures offend them?

As for Miriam, she may have enjoyed letting off steam in front of the cameras, but she can now kiss any potential campaign contributions from the women, the women's families, extended families, friends, business partners and sympathizers goodbye. And she has just lost my vote.

* * *

AND speaking of people's basic rights, that's quite an appalling tale the folks in the Muslim enclave in Culiat have to tell.

In the dead of night, masked operatives kicked down doors, ransacked belongings, then arrested all the males in sight, kicking and slapping them into submission. When the women tried to intervene, they were also kicked in the chest.

What was the crime that merited such brutality? I'm tempted to say the crime was simply being Muslim in Manila. But the masked policemen had a warrant of arrest allowing them to pick up suspects in the horrific Dec. 30 bombings. Still, is this any way to conduct intelligent police work? To swoop down into an unsuspecting neighborhood and sweep up all the men in sight? Is it reasonable to believe that the men are currently being tortured into confessing?

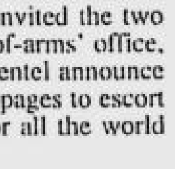
Sources told me, and this was even before the arrests in Culiat, that there exists a plan to pin the blame for the bombings on Muslim separatists, then use the "confessions" to justify a renewed escalation of the war in Mindanao. The scenario would achieve two things: occupy a restive military, and turn the headlines away from the impeachment trial to war.

But if this is a "government" scenario, and it seems to have been launched already, then are we to assume the real terrorist bombers are still out there? Unless, of course, the government is itself behind the bombings.

Notable successes and failures

SENSE AND SENSIBILITY

Bambi L. Harper



AT THE BEGINNING of the 18th century, the Spaniards were very optimistic regarding the natural riches of the Philippines and the myth of the spices was maintained for a long time. It should be remembered that the conquest of the country was driven by the belief (among other things) that the proximity of the Moluccas made it probable that the same spices and species would be found here. All the authors of the period speak about cinnamon that grew wild in Mindanao and they believed it could be cultivated to produce a quality similar to that of Ceylon. It was also expected that cultivation of pepper would produce large profits and they tried to acclimatize peppercorns, cloves and nutmeg.

The first experiment with cultivating cinnamon in the Philippines was done by Englishman Nicolas Norton Nicols, a naturalized Spanish citizen, who in 1762 started to plant it in Mindanao. He died the following year, however.

The second time was by Francisco Xavier Salgado whose name is associated with many enterprises of the time. Salgado imported cinnamon trees from Mindanao to his hacienda in Calauan near Manila and planted them there. He sent various samples to a friend to plant in his orchard in Pagsanjan with the end in view of experimenting in two distinct places simultaneously. He also sent some to the governor, Don Simon de Anda y Salazar, who had them planted in the garden of the royal palace in Intramuros.

The plants in Calauan prospered and samples were sent to Spain and were considered of excellent quality, even superior to those of Ceylon. It seemed a promising future for Philippine cinnamon but when information was sought from Governor Basco y Vargas, who was offended because Salgado had bypassed him by sending the samples directly, he insinuated in his reply that the samples were from Ceylon.

Despite this setback, the plantation in Calauan continued to prosper and in 1787 the royal botanist from the Real Compania de Filipinas, Don Juan de Cuellar, reported favorably regarding local cinnamon. Cuellar's experiments did not prosper as they were never able to eliminate the gum that gave it a disagreeable taste.

Pepper, which also grew wild, followed a similar path. Father Calvo and the fiscal of the Audiencia in Manila, Francisco Leandro de Viana, who was in charge of economic development projects, considered its exploitation profitable but the first experiment was not done until the governorship of Basco y Vargas. Even if the results were better than those of indigo, no great success was attained.

Real Compania de Filipinas, created in 1785, gave a strong thrust to cultivate pepper. Its directors said that their product was just as good as that of Malabar and could supply Spain and America, and still leave a surplus to sell in European markets, grabbing the monopoly from the Dutch. But this optimistic prediction was never fulfilled.

During those years, it was also attempted to plant nutmeg whose existence in the Philippines was known since the 17th century. In 1788 Cuellar was ordered to make an experiment, but the results were just as disappointing as the rest.

On the other hand, some useful plants were developed during this period. One of them was indigo which grew wild and abundant. Norton and Salgado tried to produce indigo in paste form, taking as a model the produce of Guatemala which supplied the royal factories in Guadalajara.

Bonga and *sibucao* were dye plants that the colonial government tried to plant experimentally. *Bonga,* a fruit of a species of palm, was brought to Spain for the first time in 1768 and experiments were carried out, but the secret of the Chinese for its use was never discovered. *Sibucao,* analogous to log wood, was used in China to obtain a red dye but did not produce a stable and durable product.

Among the plants in the Philippines that produced textiles, the primary one was cotton. It was exported raw to China where it sold for a higher price than that from Malabar. The cultivation of cotton was an ancient tradition in the provinces of Cagayan and Ilocos and was intensified and promoted in the last quarter of the 18th century by Real Compania de Filipinas which extended its cultivation to other provinces in the archipelago.

Experiments were also carried out in the cultivation of linen and hemp whose first seeds were brought to Spain by Basco y Vargas. But the experiment did not have any success.

Among nourishing plants was rice that some chronicles call "the bread of the islands." Fr. Juan Jose Delgado counted 93 distinct varieties of rice.

From the middle of the 17th century, wheat was planted in some regions of Luzon and other islands, but the only users were the Spaniards so that production was always scant. Corn brought over from Mexico was acclimated in some areas, especially the Visayas. Cacao grew wild and was, according to Father Calvo, better than that of Caracas, but did not have economic importance in the 18th century. Sugar cane, however, was cultivated extensively, encouraged mainly by Real Compania de Filipinas.

Tobacco grew abundantly in almost all places, cultivated by the natives. According to Father Delgado, Philippine tobacco was better than that of Havana. But until the end of the 18th century this did not produce much income for the treasury until the establishment of the monopoly.

(From "Filipinas en el Siglo de la Ilustracion, Historia General de Filipinas" by Ma. Lourdes Diaz-Trechuelo Lopez-Spinola)

The shade of autumn

"Hope is a strange sort of flower: it can sometimes flourish in quite unpromising terrain."—**Michael A. Costello**

YOUNGBLOOD

Maggie Costello

We want to know what the young are thinking about. What are their thoughts on current issues? We welcome contributions from the twentysomething and below.—Ed.

TIPSY with the magic of autumn, I skip along the cracked cobblestones, crunching the rust-colored leaves that clutter the sidewalk. Greeted by a most welcome silence, I bask in the glorious anonymity of the streets of Washington, D.C. I feel strangely at peace in this tranquil spot.

Suddenly, a solitary leaf falls from the great magnolia that hovers over me. I pick it up and realize that it is much too young a leaf to fall, for its colors are still vivid. The colors are so intense that the leaf looks like it is on fire. I close my eyes, and pain fills my chest.

For I am reminded:

My father once had hair redder than this leaf I now hold in my hands. My sisters used to tell me that whenever mom would cut my father's hair, they would gather tufts of the clippings on the floor into one bundle and pretend it was fire.

Of course, that was a long, long time ago. By the time I was born, my father's hair had already faded into a beautiful shade of tarnished gold.

As a kid, I would open my mother's wooden *baul* and take out our old photo albums. I especially loved the pictures from the 1970s, for they were like time machines that chronicled the instance when my mom and dad first met and fell in love with each other. I could stare at those pictures for hours! I would look at my mom with a mixture of envy and pride, for she always looked so beautiful and exotic in her A-line dresses and her long, jet-black hair hanging down to her waist. Gazing in disdain at my wavy light brown hair, I made up my mind that I was going to look exactly like her when I grew up (even if that meant dyeing my hair black).

And then there were the pictures of my dad. My brother and sisters and I would hoot endlessly at these pictures. We used to say that he looked like a regular flower child; the only things missing were a peace sign painted on his cheek and an Indian headband across his forehead. Those were the days when outrageous horn-rimmed glasses framed his deep blue eyes and his hair fell long and softly wavy (and red, really red) on his shoulders.

I open my eyes. Suddenly the silence that surrounds me has become too much for me to bear, for I am reminded of how alone I am now. I miss my dad so much it almost seems as if waves—no, tsunamis—of loneliness threaten to drown me, and I can hardly breathe. I shiver as the sharp gusts of wind dry the tears on my face.

Once again, I stare at the leaf, still flaming with the reds and oranges of autumn. Like my father, it died too early, too abruptly.

I think about the times when people look at our family with sympathetic gaze and say in soothing voices, "He will forever be in your memories."

Sure, the memories remain. However, in a world where existence requires tangibility, memories are not to be trusted: they are too fleeting, too flimsy; wispier than clouds on a breezy summer day. I cannot even begin to express how much it hurts to accept that the person I love most is becoming nothing more than a memory. Grief, I have learned, is a very strange feeling. It is one of the most complex, baffling paradoxes of life. It can be a dulling force; it will leave you numb and seemingly indifferent, yet at times it pierces and cuts through your very being, and you feel as if you had just been gutted.

"Are faded photographs and stories really all that are left of the man my father once was?" I ask myself.

That can't be true. His goodness was so real. He is so much more than that.

A realization dawns upon me. Even though this hateful thing called grief seems unbearable now, it cannot last forever. "Weeping may endure for the night, but joy cometh in the morning," the Bible says. Maybe that's it: I am in the midst of darkness now, but I need to hold on to the thought that dawn is not far behind. I am not the only one who feels this pain. My family shares it with me, and we will support each other. We will keep each other going.

Our laughter is not quite the same anymore, and perhaps it never will be. It will forever be tinged with sadness. My father's death left us with a big scar that we will forever bear, but I know that we will learn to carry it. We will move along and we will not allow it to weigh us down. Joy has not visited this family just yet, but I know that it will...someday.

So where exactly is my father? In my memories alone?

No. I feel my father's love coursing through my veins. I feel his presence within my wonderful family. Daddy will always be with us, in our hearts. He is there every time I hear my mom laugh, every time my sisters come home bringing a new book for me to read, and every time my brother flashes me one of his naughty grins.

With that in mind, I slowly walk back toward our hotel. I catch a glimpse of myself in the rearview mirror of a passing car. I see my hair catch the sunlight, turning it red-gold, and I smile. I never really wanted to go out for a walk in the first place, but I am glad I did. For not only did I find a leaf with a beautiful shade of autumn, but I also found a little bit of myself.

Maggie Costello, 18, is a Communication Arts student at the Ateneo de Manila University.

WHATEVER HAPPENED TO . . . ?

Graft case vs mayor

ON MAY 11, 1999, the town of Alfonso Castañeda in Nueva Vizcaya, through Mayor Alfredo Castillo Jr., entered into two contracts with Jerome Tan for the construction of the Lubub-Dibilit Road worth P2,471,260 and the construction of a "5-span" gymnasium worth P1.5 million.

The following day, Castillo issued a check worth P500,000 as down payment for the road project and another check worth P1,265,455 for the gymnasium project. Another check worth P1,872,409.60 was issued on May 19 for the Lubub-Dibilit Road. All checks were payable to Tan.

However, the checks were issued without the requisite certificate of acceptance and inspection report, and a certificate of completion and final acceptance. For this reason, the Commission on Audit filed a complaint against Castillo with Deputy Ombudsman for Luzon Emilio Gonzalez. The COA also discovered and included in its complaint Castillo's issuance of a total of P1.3 million in cash advances to 11 municipal officials on May 14.

On Jan. 11, 2000, Gonzalez also received an endorsement of the same complaint from the Department of Interior and Local Government through director Almario delos Santos.

Ombudsman Aniano Desierto approved on May 23, 2000, Gonzalez's recommendation for the filing of three graft cases against Castillo. The mayor was charged with violating RA 3019 or the Anti-Graft and Corrupt Practices Act for each of the following: the construction of the Lubub-Dibilit Road, the construction of the gymnasium, and the payment of the cash advances to the Sangguniang Bayan members. The cases were filed with the Sandiganbayan on June 20, 2000 and assigned to the Second Division.

The court issued a warrant for Castillo's arrest on June 28. He voluntarily surrendered to Edgardo Urieta, chief of the Sandiganbayan's security and sheriff services, on July 3. He was ordered released on the same day after payment of a P30,000 bail bond.

On Sept. 1, Castillo filed a motion for reconsideration and reinvestigation with the Office of the Ombudsman.

Then on Oct. 9, the municipal council passed a resolution requesting for the "expeditious issuance of suspension order against Castillo." On Nov. 6, the court directed lawyer Jaime Cabrera, the Sandiganbayan's executive clerk of court, to inform the council that there was no motion yet from the prosecution for the suspension of Castillo.

Case status: The trial has not yet started, pending resolution of the motion for reconsideration and reinvestigation filed by Castillo.

Armin P. Adina, PDI Research Department

Miriam's towering rage

SEN. Miriam Defensor-Santiago did it again! Truly the Greeks wisely observed that those whom the gods will destroy they first make mad. What a terrible embarrassment she has become to her namesake's illustrious or even sacred names.

All of us UP alumni, especially those from the College of Law, must do something about the problem that is Santiago, particularly her latest scandalous outburst on the Senate floor. *Talagang nakakahiya!*

It all began because Santiago through innuendo and sarcasm, practically accused the poor lady witness, lawyer Jazmin Banal, of being crazy or out-of-sorts for transferring from a higher-paying job at presidential crony Edward Serapio's law office to a lower-paying job at the Romulo Mabanta Law Office.

The senator went ballistic when several spectators craned their necks and/or slightly leaned off their seats in order to see the proceedings as their view was being blocked by a huge post and they wanted to see her facial reaction while Sen. Raul Roco tried to correct whatever wrong impressions Santiago created about the supposedly mercenary orientation of young lawyers.

Indeed Santiago is fast becoming a disgrace to the UP alumni community, to the legal profession and to Filipino womanhood in general. Above all, Santiago is endangering the very existence or at least the institutional respect the Filipino people accord to the Senate itself.

An hour after this happened, the Senate voted to bar anti-crime advocate Dante Jimenez, and two ladies (Rosanna Tuason-Fores and Bettina Araneta-Aboitiz) from the court premises, without giving them any opportunity to defend themselves!

What a disgraceful miscarriage of justice! With no less than 20 senators and the Chief Justice of our Supreme Court himself ignominiously consenting to such decision. And all because these supposed architects and guardians of our law were reduced to trembling and cowering before the near-catatonic rage of Santiago.

Shouldn't they do something to convince her to humbly submit to professional examination? The Senate and the Supreme Court itself may soon be overwhelmed by the people's anger.

O tempora, o mores! Onli in da Pilipins...—**EDUARDO B. OLAGUER, Aurora Milestone Bldg., 1045 Aurora Blvd., Quezon City**

Vital changes needed in power reform bill

IT was reported that Congress will convene in a special session on Jan. 8 to 12 to ratify urgent bills which include, among others, the Power Reform Bill.

This bill has put the consumers in a position where they are damned if they remain indifferent and damned if they oppose it. Just like any other bill, it has its share of imperfections and to be indifferent to it simply means the consumers' continued exploitation and to oppose its passage will also mean continued high power cost and inefficient service and perpetuation of the hapless conditions of the consumers under this present monopolistic structure of the power industry.

The National Association of Electricity Consumers for Reforms Inc. (Nasecore) believes that there is an urgent need to restructure the power industry and thus supports the passage of the Power Reform Bill if only to bring down power rates and give consumers efficient service by providing them the power of choice through competition.

The privatization of the National Power Corp, the most controversial issue in the bill, is a necessary step to ensure that the present monopolistic structure of the industry will be dismantled in order to set the initial competitive environment that will lead to a more level playing field for the industry players.

However, alongside this support, we are pushing for the inclusion of certain provisions to ensure that the bill's avowed objective of consumer benefits will be realized soonest.

First, on the matter of retail competition and open access (Section 31), we believe that the threshold level should be reduced from two megawatts as specified in the bill to only one MW.

Moreover, the implementation of retail competition and open access (Section 31) should not be dependent on the other two conditions which are: (a) approval of unbundled transmission and distribution retail wheeling charges, and (b) privatization of at least 70 percent of the total capacity of generating assets of the Napocor and of the total capacity of the power plants under contract with the Napocor in Luzon. These two conditions, if not met, will cause delay in the implementation of retail competition and open access. Therefore, the ERC should be given a deadline for approval of not later than three years and the other condition should be scrapped so as to allow retail competition and open access to work also not later than the three-year prescribed period.

Second, the proposed caps in the market share of the generating companies should not be lifted until such time that sufficient competition has been achieved. This will ensure a level playing field for the industry players.

Third, the amount of electricity that an electric utility or distributor can buy from its affiliate generation company should be limited to only 20 percent of its capacity. The absence of this limitation can weaken competition and lead to price manipulation that will endanger consumer welfare.

Fourth, we believe that no distinction should be made between private distribution utilities and electric cooperatives. The same standards and schedules should apply to all electricity distributors for retail competition and open access. To delay the implementation of retail competition and open access, as in the case of electric cooperatives, is to deprive its more than four million household consumers the same rights and privileges that private utility customers will be enjoying. This double standard will also deprive the electric cooperatives the opportunity to strive for more efficient operations that can be translated into lower power cost under a restructured industry.

Finally, on the Wholesale Electricity Spot Market (Section 30), we believe that membership here should be made mandatory so that we can be sure that every kilowatt-hour of electricity traded has truly gone through the sieve of competition thus, affording the consumers the lowest cost of electricity.—**PETE L. ILAGAN, president, National Association of Electricity Consumers for Reforms Inc., 10 Bayside Court Compound, 680 Quirino Ave., Tambo, Parañaque City**

OFWs need more than 'red-carpet welcome'

THE "RED-CARPET WELCOME" for our overseas Filipino workers returning for the holidays clearly exposes President Estrada as a prevaricator. The publicity stunts, of course, are meant to project, in the favorite phrase of advertisers, a pro-OFW image for the scandal-plagued administration. But the welcome is also an implied admission that for about more than two decades since the Marcos era, the government has resorted to shortsighted measures instead of solving the problems of our OFWs strategically and effectively.

The Department of Foreign Affairs said that 87 OFWs came home in a box this Christmas season, but it was drowned-out by government-financed publicity stunts. A metaphor of sorts for the "red-carpet welcome" accorded to our modern heroes every Christmas, the cries of grief and pain being overwhelmed by this sham treatment. Indeed, it is ironic that we give every end of the year a "red-carpet welcome" for our OFWs who will be home only for a couple of weeks, but once they leave again to work abroad for another couple of years, they are forgotten by the government for the rest of the year!

Of course, our OFWs deserve the thanks of their countrymen. And they deserve all the niceties and amenities this country can give them especially from the government, considering their remittances prop up our sinking economy. But this contribution of our OFWs came with much blood, sweat and tears. More than the amenities and hoopla, they need the necessary protection of the government from the wolves (read: recruiters and employers) who pounce on them, both here and abroad.

The "red-carpet welcome" may project for the government an image of being OFW-friendly. But this can't make the government less guilty of lack of political will to forge bilateral labor agreements with countries where cases of abuse of OFWs are prevalent, for its lack of energy to generate local jobs and its ineptitude in safeguarding the rights of our OFWs.

The "red-carpet welcome" pales in comparison with recruiter-friendly policies being implemented by the administration: Executive Order No. 197 allowing government agencies, including Philippine embassies and consulates, to raise their fees and charges by at least 20 percent; the continuing deployment of Filipino workers to countries where there isn't any legal protection for our OFWs and cases of human rights violations are rampant like Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and Northern Marianas Islands; the implementation of the dubious "trainee system" for South Korean-bound OFWs; and the mechanisms now in place which make recruiters grin from ear to ear. The logic behind this "red carpet welcome" is that as soon as OFWs return to their own land, the dereliction and inefficiency of the government in safeguarding the rights of our OFWs would be submerged under the festivities.—**JERBERT M. BRIOLA, resource and advocacy program, Kanlungan Centre Foundation Inc., Center for Migrant Workers, 77 K-10th St., Kamias, Quezon City**

God will keep Jubilee Year's promise

COMMENTARY

Howard Q. Dee

AS the Holy Father officially ends the Great Jubilee Year on Jan. 7 with the closing of the Holy Doors of St Peter's Basilica, we pause to reflect on the Jubilee celebration and ask: Where is the joy and the jubilation and the promise of springtime for our faith? Storm clouds cast a long shadow of gloom over our people, as if the entire nation is on a death watch. Even the Holy Father seemed to share this somber mood during his Christmas homily when he said: "We cannot but recall the long shadows of death...Yet however dense the darkness may appear, our hope for the triumph of the light which appeared on this holy night at Bethlehem is stronger still."

To help us discern the Pope's message, we recall the words of two princes of the Church who, before they died, foretold a fierce spiritual battle in our time. Cardinal Hans Urs Von Baltazar, describing this time, said. "The nearer the end approaches, the more fierce becomes the battle. The more the Holy Spirit becomes present in history, the more prevalent is what Jesus calls the sin against the Holy Spirit." Cardinal John O'Connor said, "What the fire does not destroy, it purifies."

The Holy Father himself confirms that "as we enter the new millennium, the struggle for the world's soul is now at its height where the spirit of the world seems strongest." The Spirit of God is now at work in ways mysterious but everlasting. The process of purification has begun. Catholic historian Ralph Martin wrote, "As we approach the new millennium, it appears that the darkness is growing darker and yet the light is shining more brightly."

Our national soul is now experiencing its dark night. Yet the fire that purifies it is blazing more brightly. As God writes straight with crooked lines, he will keep the promise of the Jubilee Year. The purifying process is not just for a few, it will be encompassing as the Lord comes to free all of us from our captives' fetters. Ateneo de Manila expresses it aptly: "As our initial reactions to the crisis deepened with more reflection on our lives and values as a nation, we realized that we are all partly responsible for the perverted values and unjust structures that have brought this crisis upon us. We all need to take part in the process of renewal and change." Paraphrasing Cardinal O'Connor, we can say that what the fire does not purify, it consumes.

This time of purification is also a time of martyrdom, as revealed by the Third Secret of Fatima which depicted angels collecting the blood of the martyrs to purify those striving toward the Cross of Salvation. There is no greater gift than this—that God comes to give of Himself in sacrifice, a helpless babe, wrapped in swaddling clothes, laid in a manger, with a simple message: Love one another as I have loved you. The God who could not die took human form from His mother so that he could give His life to us in sacrifice. He came with a promise, renewed by His Mother, a promise of deliverance from the slavery of sin—in the end, love will triumph and justice will prevail.

This sense of knowing the presence of God's Spirit now working in our midst fills us with an inner joy as we await the day "when hope shall sing its triumph and sadness flee away." This will be the day of Mary's Magnificat: the mighty shall be brought down from their thrones, the lowly lifted up, the hungry filled with good things, the rich turned away empty. This is the time of fulfillment of the Lord's promise to Mary and her children forever.

Soon after Pope John Paul II's collegial consecration of the world to Mary in 1984, we had our Edsa experience and the communist walls of Berlin and Kremlin started to crumble. With the consecration of the Philippines to Mary during the Jubilee Year led by our cardinals and bishops, followed by the Pope's entrustment to Mary, old walls of division are breaking down to give way to solidarity, truth, integrity and justice. The sheep are being separated from the goats, the wheat from the chaff. The fire of conversion and national renewal is raging to purify us and to reveal what we hold as good, noble and true. Many souls are being bared and hearts revealed; a nation is being reborn with the courage and sacrifice of many and the blood of innocent martyrs.

The players in this grand stage of purification and renewal are all instruments of God's grand design, acting out their own roles. We must pray for all of them. There is no room for hatred and revenge in this time of grace. It is God's hour; vengeance is His. God is in control. Even in the darkness, His Spirit—the Spirit of renewal and rebirth—is directing the events. He shall keep His promise of the Jubilee Year. The year of the Lord's favor will end with a day of vindication for our God (Isaiah 61):

They will rebuild their ancient ruins and restore the places long devastated,
Instead of their shame my people will receive a double portion,
And instead of disgrace they will rejoice in their inheritance,
And so they will inherit a double portion in their land,
And everlasting Joy will be theirs.

For I the Lord, love justice;
I hate robbery and iniquity.
In my faithfulness I will reward them
And make an everlasting covenant with them.
Their descendants will be known among the nations.
And their offspring among the peoples.
All who see them will acknowledge
That they are a people the Lord has blessed.

Estrada needs a Sir Galahad

PRESIDENT Joseph Estrada committed a costly error in appointing former Sen. Ernesto Maceda as his personal spokesperson in place of Ricardo Puno, who resigned allegedly to run for the Senate next year (although there is talk he was actually abandoning a sinking ship).

The President and Maceda are known kindred spirits, but that is not the sort of qualification of a presidential mouthpiece who must project to the public the image of a President who is innocent of the charges of bribery, graft and corruption, etc. He must have forgotten how former Mayor Arsenio Lacson described Maceda in seven words, which are now part and parcel of our political glossary.

What the President needs for a spokesperson is someone like Sir Galahad (not the scoundrel Sir Lancelot) of King Arthur's Round Table, the knight with a "pure and noble heart." But can he find a Sir Galahad in his stable of cronies and relatives? You tell me.—**DELFIN L. GONZALEZ, 18 Doña Ines, Alabang Hills, Muntinlupa City**

Worse than death penalty?

AMBASSADOR Ernesto Maceda, President Estrada's spokesperson for the impeachment trial, said the experience is "worse than the death penalty."

I agree wholeheartedly. So let us put a stop to this impeachment trial and give President Estrada the death penalty instead.

I thank Maceda for putting the interest of the Filipino people above all else. I am looking forward to reading his autobiography, though I'm not sure whether I should look under fiction or non-fiction.

To the INQUIRER: I try to read your paper and another "less aggressive" one (you know what I mean) every morning to have a feel of both sides of the issues. Ever since the trial, though, I gave up on the other paper because the whitewashing has gotten so sickening despite the amount of evidence piling up against President Estrada. I don't care about legal technicalities anymore, a goat is a goat is a goat.

If you decide to print this, please withhold my address. I have no interest in debating with other readers.—**TOTI C. BRAVO, Loyola Heights, Quezon City**

Waterless for 60 days

FOR ABOUT 60 days already, major areas in the City of Cavite remain waterless. Water is pumped into the home pipes for only two to four hours during the early morning hours. Residents usually have to wake up or stay awake to get their water supply. And the Maynilad office has kept silent since the problem started. The affected residents have not been informed about the problem and the solutions being undertaken, if any, to solve the problem.

I have called the Maynilad office in Noveleta and reported the problem to Danny Cuizon. But he has not explained the problem to city residents and we have not been informed regarding the status of the repairs.

I have read about the planned water service rate increase and this definitely is not commensurate to the poor service—or better still, no service—we have been getting for the past 60 days at the very least.

I hope the city government as well as Maynilad will solve this problem immediately.—**EFREN J. DOMINGO, 441 Padre Pio, Cavite City**

Other sins of Erap

FORMER EXECUTIVE Secretary Ronaldo Zamora told us that there has been a real change at Malacañang. The "Midnight Cabinet" has been disbanded. The President's work schedule is now focused on governance. Issues are now addressed in a more formal and structured way, etc.

But it is now too late in the day for all that.

It is not just the P400-million *jueteng* money, or the P130-million tobacco excise tax, or even the prima facie ill-gotten P500-million investment the President made through the Equitable PCI Bank's trust department. It is all that and more: his involvement in, failure to prevent, or tolerance of the P200-million textbook deal, the P16-million deal on handcuffs, the use of luxury vehicles seized by customs, the P200-million Motorola deal, the P3.6-billion police drug test deal, the P300-million rigged contract to purchase 100 fire trucks, the P430-million Philippine Charity and Sweepstakes Office fund mess exposed by Sr. Christine Tan, the BW Resources scandal, the P25-billion tax case decided in favor of a close crony, the P12-million Land Bank donation used to buy luxury vehicles, and all the scams that punctuated his two-and-a-half-year administration.

The People's Tribunal after hearing about 20 witnesses and going over documentary evidence submitted to it, found the President accountable for the following:

- Impoverishment of the people, with tens of thousands of workers and farmers laid off and displaced.
- Deprivation of the people of basic social services.
- Revival of cronyism and reinforcement of patronage in government affairs.
- Submissiveness to foreign capital, big business and cronies by allowing them to ravage the economy through indiscriminate trade liberalization, deregulation and privatization.
- Acquiescence to the neo-liberal model promoted by international financial institutions such as the International Monetary Fund, World Bank and Asian Development Bank, causing the country underdevelopment and backwardness.
- Legitimization of double standards, sexual exploitation and further degradation of women.
- Heightened commercial exploitation of natural resources at the expense of community rights, local autonomy and ecological protection.
- Non-recognition of the rights of indigenous peoples over ancestral domain and lands.

It is the loss of credibility and moral authority which renders the President utterly unfit to continue serving as Chief Executive.

It is Estrada's failure to be guided by RILE—Responsibility, Integrity, Loyalty and Efficiency—qualities which are expected of all public officials, especially the President of this republic.

It is his dismal failure to faithfully fulfill his duties, to uphold the Constitution, to execute the law, do justice and serve the people, especially the *masa*, all of which he swore to do in June, two and a half years ago at the Luneta.

And that is why, we, his countrymen, have been imploring the Divine Providence to give him the guidance to let go. The time is now. *Hirap na po ang ating mga kababayan!*—**OSCAR F. SANTOS, COIR, 84 Masikap St., Teachers Village, Quezon City**

Serial murderer may have killed 265

LONDON—Serial murderer Harold Shipman, a British doctor who is already serving life prison terms over the deaths of 15 patients, may have killed up to 265 people, Britain's Times reported Friday, citing a government dossier.

It said an independent audit of his clinical practice, due to be published later Friday, had found at least 250 more deaths during his career than other doctors in the same area at the same time.

The 55-year-old Shipman was convicted on Jan. 31 last year of killing 15 women patients by giving them overdoses of diomorphine, the legal term for heroin.

Afterward, Health Secretary Alan Milburn ordered an immediate statistical audit of Shipman's clinical practice between 1974 and 1998.

The findings of that study have now been passed to police amid fears that the doctor, who operated in Manchester, northwest England, may have murdered far more patients than the 15 for which he was sentenced to life imprisonment.

Chief Medical Officer Professor Liam Donaldson asked Professor Richard Baker of the University of Leicester to carry out the study.

He compared the number of patient deaths recorded by Shipman with those of other family doctors in the area.

The study compared trends such as the time of death and whether the doctor involved or any relatives of the victim were present at the time.

He did not investigate individual cases during the 24-year period, but the 250 excess deaths appear to confirm fears that Shipman killed many more people than previously thought.

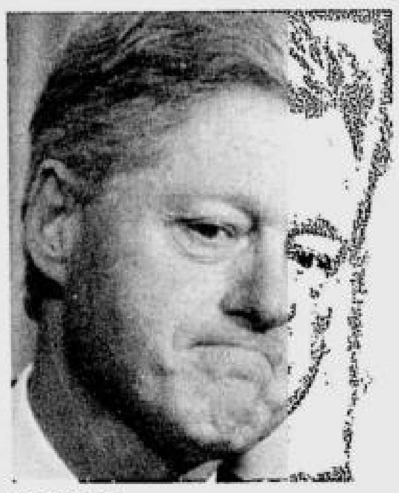
The Times said the study found that a pattern in his killings had started early in his career and accelerated sharply.

Soon after Shipman's conviction, police announced they had opened inquiries into the deaths of another 39 of his patients and were investigating as many as 175 cases.

Later, they said they had amassed sufficient evidence to charge the doctor with the murder of 23 more people.

However, a new trial was ruled out for two main reasons. Victims' families did not think it would be in the public interest, as Shipman was in any case already serving life.

Secondly, lawyers doubted whether he would get a fair trial because of the enormous publicity generated by the first hearing. *AFP*


CLINTON

PEACE SETTLEMENTS

Israel to give Clinton detailed reply

WASHINGTON—Israel is set to deliver to the White House a detailed response to President Bill Clinton's framework for a negotiated settlement with the Palestinians.

Contents of the six-page document, addressed to Sandy Berger, the president's national security adviser, were not disclosed.

But after three hours of talks Thursday night with American mediators, an Israeli official said his government endorsed Clinton's proposals as a way to move forward in peacemaking.

The only condition was that Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat accept Clinton's outline as well, said the official, speaking on condition of anonymity.

The talks were held at a hotel between Gilead Sher, a veteran Israeli negotiator, and White House and State Department officials. They were due to resume Friday at the same undisclosed location.

Arafat told Clinton at the White House on Tuesday that he accepted the president's formula, with reservations.

Secretary of State Madeleine Albright told reporters Thursday that Israel had reservations, as well.

"Each one has a different interpretation, and we are trying to clarify" the proposals for both, she said.

Albright did not say whether Clinton, in the process, was open to making changes in order to get negotiations started in the little more than two weeks he has left in the White House.

"The real problem at the moment is the violence," Albright said. "That is the message we are sending." Concerned that flickering peace hopes could be snuffed out if Israel were to come under attack again, Albright advised Arafat to keep the promises he made to Clinton on Tuesday to curb violence.

Using a public forum, a joint news conference with the Yugoslav Foreign Minister Goran Svilanovic, Albright declared: "It is absolutely essential for him to live up to the various commitments he made to try to lessen violence and get it under control." *AP*

Japanese tourist nabbed in sex crime

PHNOM PENH—Police said Friday they have arrested a 36-year-old Japanese tourist on suspicion of having sex with a minor and making pornographic videos.

Takeshi Ozawa, whom police identified as an engineer from Aichi prefecture (state), southwest of Tokyo, was taken into custody Thursday afternoon at a Phnom Penh hotel. Police said they acted on a tip from hotel staff that the suspect was with a 14-year-old girl.

The arrest marked the third time in nine months that Cambodian authorities arrested a foreigner suspected of having sex with a girl under the age of 15.

It is illegal to have sex with someone under the age of 15 in Cambodia and the crime carries a penalty of up to 20 years in prison.

Government spokesperson Khieu Kanharith said recently that though there is no increase in the number of pedophiles traveling to Cambodia, arrests are increasing as the authorities are cracking down on sex tourists.

However, activist Yim Po of the Cambodian Center for the Protection of Child's Rights has said that more pedophiles are coming to Cambodia because authorities are unwilling or unable to stop them. He said that even if tourists get caught, they can often bribe their way out of custody.

Ozawa took photographs of the girl and had sex with her, said a senior officer at the city's immigration police bureau who asked not to be identified. The official said the girl was probably a sex worker and that she acknowledged to police her sexual activities with the Japanese suspect.

Police confiscated one still camera, one video camera and three artificial penises. Ozawa entered Cambodia on Dec. 29 and spent several days with the girl, police said.

Phnom Penh prosecutor Yet Chakriya said court officials would review evidence to determine if the suspect should be charged. *AP*

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Vodafone New Zealand (Bell South)

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Poland
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(PLUS GSM) Polkomtel S.A., (ERA GSM) Polska, (IDEA) PTK Centertel

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Portugal
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Optimus, TMN, Telecel

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Romania
(0040)
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Russia
(007)
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Bush assembles a diverse Cabinet

WASHINGTON—Several women. Two blacks. A couple of Hispanics. By the time President-elect George W. Bush announced the last of his Cabinet selections this week, he had managed to assemble a group every bit as diverse as the one put together by the man he will replace.

President Bill Clinton began his presidency, in 1993, with the most diverse Cabinet in US history, fulfilling a campaign promise to build a government that "looks like America."

He also set a new standard for his successors—one that Bush has met.

"I don't really think it's possible anymore to form a government of all white men in this country and that's quite remarkable," observed Ruth Mandel, director of the Eagleton Institute of Politics at Rutgers University and an expert on women and politics.

Bush is putting women and minorities in charge of eight of 14 statutory Cabinet departments. He has tapped three women, one of them Latina, two blacks, a Hispanic man, an Asian-American and an Arab-American. The Republican president-to-be also has chosen a woman to run the Environmental Protection Agency, which he has designated a Cabinet-level post, as did Clinton.

Clinton also had eight women and minorities in his first Cabinet. Three were women, including one black. There also were two Hispanics and three black men, along with a female EPA chief. Clinton also put women in charge of several other Cabinet-level agencies.

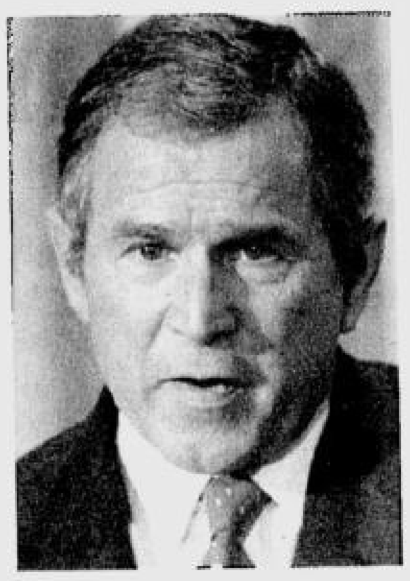
His replacements for departing secretaries included one black woman, a Hispanic, two black men, another female and the first Asian-American named to the Cabinet.

Cecilia Muñoz, vice president for policy at the National Council of La Raza, the nation's largest Latino civil rights organization, said Cabinet diversity didn't start with Clinton but that "his commitment to it has set a standard which is clearly being followed."

The all white-male Cabinet changed some in 1933, during the Great Depression, when President Franklin Delano Roosevelt chose Frances Perkins, a woman, to head the Department of Labor.

More than 30 years later, in 1966, the country got its first black Cabinet member in Housing Secretary Robert Weaver, who served under President Lyndon B. Johnson.

President Jimmy Carter named the first black woman, Patricia Harris, who oversaw two departments—Housing and Urban Development and later Health and Human Services. In 1988, late in his second term, President Ronald Reagan appointed the first Hispanic, Education Secretary Lauro F. Cavazos, who continued in the post under President George Bush, the president-elect's father. Bush also had Manual Lujan Jr. as Interior secretary, another Latino. *AP*



BUSH

6 killed in latest Aceh raid

JAKARTA—Fighting between government troops and separatist rebels in Indonesia's violence-wracked Aceh province has left at least six people dead, police and hospital workers said Friday.

The latest bloodshed comes just days before negotiators for the two sides are due to meet in Switzerland for a final round of peace talks before a truce expires on Jan. 15.

Some Cabinet ministers and hardline Army generals are pressing President Abdurrahman Wahid to launch a major crackdown against the insurgents, and rebel leaders have warned of civil war if the truce is not extended. The two sides are tentatively scheduled to meet on Monday in Geneva.

The separatist Free Aceh Movement has been waging a low-level insurgency against Indonesian rule for the past 26 years. At least 6,000 people have been killed in the past decade in the region on the northern tip of Sumatra island.

Since the ceasefire came into effect in June last year, at least 520 people have died and another 325 are missing.

Local police chief Lt. Col. Abdullah Hayati said four people, including one police officer, were killed in clashes with rebels in the east of the province on Thursday.

Hospital officials said two unidentified bodies were found in other parts of the region on Friday.

The latest deaths bring to 13 the number of people killed so far this year.

Meanwhile. American-owned Exxon Mobil, which has extensive oil and natural gas operations in Aceh, said it had beefed up security in response to a warning by the rebel group that it should leave the region.

"We are monitoring the situation in Aceh closely and will take actions we deem appropriate for the daily circumstances in our operational areas," the company said in a statement.

Earlier, this week the rebels warned the company to leave the region for its own safety. Last month, an Exxon Mobil-chartered commuter plane was hit by gunfire, forcing it to abort a landing in the province. No one was injured. *AP*

Veterans end adventure on WWII ship

NASSAU, Bahamas—Sunburned and windblown but victorious, a band of aging US veterans reached the Bahamas on Thursday after taking their World War II ship on a nostalgic trans-Atlantic voyage to bring the vessel home.

The 29 vets—gray-bearded, white-haired and average age 72—headed later Thursday to Mobile, Alabama, the final destination of their 7,000-km journey.

"We just wanted to bring this thing back," Bruce Voges, 74, of Oakwood, Illinois, said as he secured the 100-m vessel to the dock in Nassau harbor.

"It brings back memories, but sometimes it brings back memories that you don't want to remember," said Voges, setting his baseball cap back-to-front with a tattooed arm.

"Just seeing it brings back some good memories," said Bob Maden, who could not make the trip because of bad eyesight but flew from Fort Lauderdale, Florida, for its arrival. "This is a birthday present for me," said Maden, who turns 74 Friday.

The vets have been at sea since Dec. 12, when they left Gibraltar after running into engine trouble in the Mediterranean and stopping for nearly a month. The trip began in Greece on Nov. 17 and was expected to end next week in Mobile, where the vets hope to turn the 60-year-old Naval Vessel LST-325 into a museum and national monument.

"They said it could not have been done . . . But we did it!" said a jubilant message posted Wednesday on the adventurers' website by electrician Bailey Wrinkle of McKenzie, Tennessee. He crowed over those who said, "No way . . . no way it could be done."

The trip was not without incident. Besides the engine trouble, one member of the crew, Bill Hart, became seriously ill shortly after the ship left Greece. He died after returning to the United States.

Landing Ship Tank 325—it has no name—arrived in Nassau, the Bahamian capital, to pick up oil, produce and a case of beer while divers repaired a silver-dollar-size hole on the rust-crusted starboard bow. Among those relieved that the trip is nearly over are family members who have anxiously followed the ship's progress.

"I was a little frightened, especially when they went off across the Atlantic in that old ship," said Lois Jornlin of Earlville, Illinois, wife of Capt. Robert D. Jornlin. "The closer they are to home, the better I feel about it." *AP*

A GIANT paper dragon scales up the side of a building in Bangkok during a promotion by the city government to encourage Thais to vote in today's general election where millions will vote for the prime minister. REUTERS

Thai telecom magnate set to win premiership

BANGKOK—Frustration with the slow recovery from the Asian economic crisis that struck three and a half years ago is set to propel Thailand's most successful businessman to the premiership in Saturday's general election.

But whether telecom tycoon Thaksin Shinawatra gets to stay in office is another matter.

The battle for votes will be only half the story when Thaksin's new Thai Rak Thai, or Thai Love Thai, party goes head-to-head at the polls with the Democrats of Prime Minister Chuan Leekpai, the country's oldest political party.

The National Counter Corruption Commission has ruled that Thaksin, a billionaire, deliberately concealed a small portion of his vast wealth when he served briefly as a deputy prime minister in the previous government.

If the Constitutional Court upholds the ruling, Thaksin would be barred from public office for five years and unseated as prime minister after only a few months in office.

Other winners Saturday may also end up losers, sparking fears the country could be thrown into a constitutional crisis.

Widespread poll fraud is anticipated, and a source in the Election Commission, who demanded anonymity, said re-votes may have to be called in as many as a quarter of the constituencies.

The election is regarded as a crucial contest between a growing movement to stamp out endemic corruption in Thai society and old-time money politics.

Thaksin, 51, the founder of Thailand's biggest telecommunications conglomerate, has quickened the pulse of the more than 44 million registered voters with a slick and well-financed election campaign.

"Thaksin has been innovative by taking up clear policy issues. He has come out and said here is my vision for Thailand. No party leader has ever really been so bold before," said Pasuk Phongpaichit, a political scientist at Bangkok's Chulalongkorn University. "Thai Rak Thai has captured the mood of the people."

Opinion polls have forecast Thai Rak Thai could win 200 or more of the 500 parliamentary seats, which in Thailand's fragmented political system where local patronage counts more than ideology, would be a huge chunk of the vote, placing it well to form a coalition government. No single party usually wins an outright majority *AP*

Pinochet refuses medical tests, queries from judge

SANTIAGO—Former Chilean dictator Augusto Pinochet refused Thursday to submit to medical tests and an interrogation ordered by a judge seeking to put him on trial for murder and kidnapping, one of his attorneys said.

"The Pinochet family has followed the advice given by the legal defense team," to ignore the order from Judge Juan Guzman Tapia, Pinochet lawyer Jose Maria Eyzaguirre told a press conference here.

Later Thursday, the former dictator's lawyers, who have called the judge's investigation legal persecution, filed a formal disciplinary complaint against Guzman.

They insisted Guzman was wrong to schedule Pinochet's deposition immediately after his medical tests and said the general should be deposed only after the results of his tests became known.

A day earlier, Pinochet's lead defense lawyer Pablo Rodriguez described the judge's order as "disrespectful to the person of General Pinochet and to the armed forces."

Meanwhile, Guzman promised to follow the law in dealing with Pinochet's refusal to follow his orders.

"All these measures are described in the Procedural Code," he told local radio.

Guzman, investigating 202 complaints against Pinochet, ordered the ex-dictator undergo medical tests Jan. 7 and 8 and appear for questioning Jan. 9.

Pinochet, 85, ruled Chile with an iron fist from 1973 to 1990 following a bloody military coup that overthrew socialist president Salvador Allende.

The complaints against Pinochet stem from the deaths or disappearances of more than 3,000 people during his rule.

Last month, Guzman issued an order for Pinochet's house arrest and charged him with murder and kidnapping in the deaths and disappearances of 75 opponents in the month after he took power.

The arrest order and indictment concerning the so-called "Caravan of Death" were overturned by Chile's Supreme Court because Pinochet had not been questioned about the case.

Prosecuting lawyer Carmen Hertz said Wednesday a refusal by Pinochet to submit to the order for medical tests and to answer questions from Guzman would amount to contempt of court.

The two days of physical and psychological examinations had been fixed to determine Pinochet's fitness to stand trial.

Pinochet's lawyers maintain their client, who suffers from diabetes and a series of cardiovascular diseases, is not up to the stress of trial. *AFP*

Gunman forces entry into television bldg

LISBON—An armed man angered over a drawn-out legal dispute with Portugal's state television company burst into the broadcaster's Lisbon headquarters Thursday and threatened to detonate a bomb.

The man, who was accompanied by his wife, his ex-wife and two daughters, gave himself up after eight hours barricaded in a bathroom. No injuries were reported and police said later they found no explosives.

The man, who said he was armed with a pistol, a flare gun and a homemade explosive device, forced his way past security guards into the RTP television building in central Lisbon, RTP said.

Dozens of onlookers cheered and applauded Manuel Subtil as officers escorted him out of the building, an apparent show of support for his outrage at Portugal's notoriously slow legal system. Subtil waved back and blew kisses to the crowd.

The man, who was armed with a pistol and a flare gun, forced his way past security guards into the television building, RTP said.

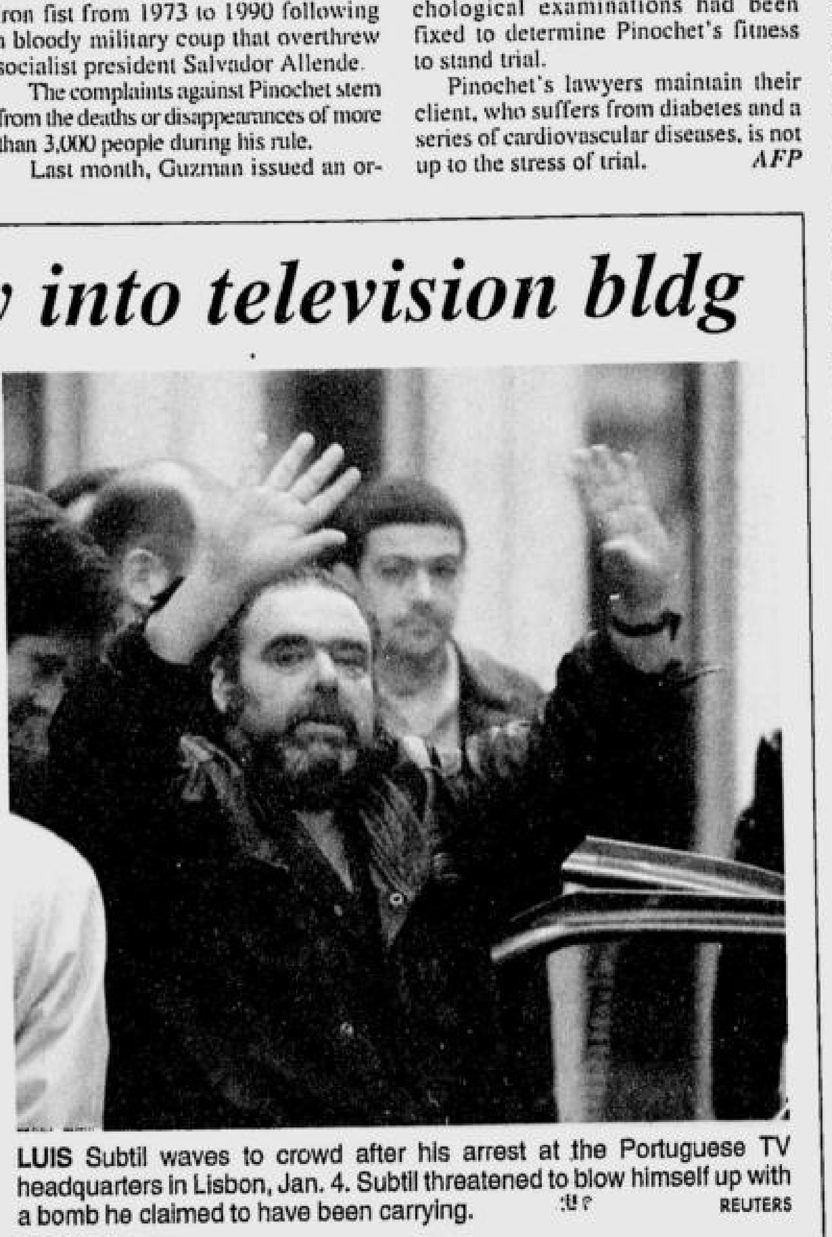
Subtil had shut himself in a bathroom near the main door after the guards threatened to alert the police. Officers evacuated the 12-story building and cordoned off the busy street.

He claimed his family—including two girls, aged 5 and 15—was with him voluntarily. The two girls left the bathroom about five and a half hours after the family entered the building. The man's wife left with him and they were taken into police custody. It was unclear when his ex-wife gave herself up.

The man said in cellular phone interviews with Portuguese media that he would shoot himself and explode a bomb unless RTP paid him compensation for damages allegedly caused by an RTP report 10 years ago that he claimed ruined his company.

Subtil entered the building about 7:20 a.m. and held a pistol to the head of a security guard and a cleaning lady at the main door.

The two channels of RTP, Radiotelevisao Portuguesa, were broadcasting normally after the incident. *AP*



LUIS Subtil waves to crowd after his arrest at the Portuguese TV headquarters in Lisbon, Jan. 4. Subtil threatened to blow himself up with a bomb he claimed to have been carrying. REUTERS

WORLDBRIEFS

2nd set of Oscar statuettes

CHICAGO—Hollywood will have no shortage of Oscars this year. The Chicago foundry that makes the gold-plated statuettes plans to mint a second set on the slim chance that last year's theft is repeated. This year's winners of Hollywood's famed Academy Awards will receive statuettes originally intended for last year's winners before they were stolen off a truck dock. All but three of the 55 statuettes stolen prior to last year's ceremony were found in a trash bin by junk dealer Willie Fulgear, who was invited to the event and given a $50,000 reward—which he later claimed was stolen from his home. *Reuters*

'Bill wasn't listening to me'

ROME—Pope John Paul was quoted as saying the only world leader he was never really able to have a proper conversation with was outgoing US President Bill Clinton. In a wide-ranging interview published in Italian weekly magazine Oggi, the surgeon who operated on the Pope in 1994 said the 80-year-old Pontiff had revealed details of some of his encounters during relaxed conversations. Quoting what the Pope said to him, Fineschi said: "The only leader I did not manage to have a proper conversation with was Clinton. I was speaking and he was looking at one of the walls, admiring the frescos and the paintings. "He was not listening to me," Fineschi quoted the Pope as saying. *Reuters*

Guinness gets day in court

LOS ANGELES—Every dog has his day and Guinness the Rottweiler is getting his day in court in a tug of love between master and mistress. The 54-kg black-and-tan canine was the object of a bitter custody battle between former bar bouncer C. Brooks Brann and his estranged girlfriend Patti Dalby. Dalby, who split up with Brann in August 1999, says Guinness cannot be separated from his own best doggie pal Roxie, with whom he shares "a yard and a bond like husband and wife." Brann, who is seeking custody of Guinness and $50,000 in damages from Dalby, has asked for the dog to visit the courtroom so the judge can see where his affections lie. Superior Court judge Geoffrey Glass was considering the request but said he was "not inclined to make this, literally, a dog and pony show without the pony." *Reuters*

'Beauty comes before life'

HONG KONG—The old Chinese saying "beauty comes before life" ran true to form in Hong Kong when a group of women refused to evacuate a burning office tower until their nails were perfect. "We took the risk because we wanted to get our job done," Rebecca Lee, owner of the Fingertrix nail salon, told Reuters. Lee and two staff members were putting acrylic finger nails on two customers when fire broke out on the rooftop of their building in Hong Kong's bustling Central district. Scores of office workers rushed out of the building and no one was injured. But the five women opted not to exit immediately despite being warned by security guards that they should leave. "I think deep down, we were all a bit nervous but all of us appeared very calm," Lee said. Happy with their polished nails, the women left more than an hour later, after the fire had been put out. *Reuters*

Greek minister's son killed

MEXICO CITY—Mexican police arrested three juveniles believed responsible for the New Year's Eve killing of Konstantin Iannidis, the son of Greek Labor Minister Passos Iannidis, local press reported Wednesday. Guerrero state judicial police chief Rafael Salinas said the youths, whose names were not released, all come from the city of Taxco, 40 km south of the capital, where the attack and killing of the 27-year-old Iannidis occurred, a local television station said. One of the youths was caught as he attempted to flee the scene of the crime Sunday. The knife used in the stabbing was found in a nearby field, Salinas said. Passos Iannidis arrived in Mexico Tuesday to collect the body of his son, a postgraduate student in the United States who was celebrating Christmas in Mexico. Konstantin Iannidis was alone at the time of the attack. The funeral will take place in Athens, according to Greek Embassy officials. *AFP*

W. Visayas media men condemn murder

BY RECTO VIDAL AND
ODON BANDIOLA
PDI Visayas Bureau

KALIBO, Aklan—Media groups in Western Visayas yesterday condemned the assassination of Rolando Ureta, program director of RMN-dyKR, and urged authorities to immediately arrest his killers.

The National Union of Journalists of the Philippines' Commission for the Protection of Journalists (NUJP-CPJ) and the Iloilo Press Club Inc. (IPCI) said the killing was an assault to press freedom.

The reward money for the suspects' arrest increased to P71,000 yesterday after Aklan Gov. Florencio Miraflores pledged P10,000 and Rodson Mayor, former president of the Federation of Barangay Captains in Aklan, offered P1,000.

The Radio Mindanao Network station based in New York City had pledged P50,000 and Aklan Rep. Allan Quimpo, P10,000 (not P50,000 as earlier reported).

"His killing is a direct assault on freedom of the press and must be treated as a very serious threat to the profession," said Lemuel Fernandez, IPCI president and Visayas Examiner executive editor.

He also urged all journalists to "close ranks against this very serious threat to the profession."

"We urge the Philippine National Police to leave no stone . . . unturned in investigating this dastardly act and give justice to the victim and his family," Fernandez said.

Edgar Cadagat, NUJP-CPJ chair who is based in Bacolod City, Negros Occidental, said Ureta's killing came two months after Olipio Jalapit Jr., a Radyo Agong reporter in Dapitan, was gunned down in November.

"(The) NUJP-CPJ further urges all media practitioners who have monitored threats to their lives and who have experienced harassment to (come) out in the open to preempt possible attempts to silence them as well," he said.

Ureta, 30, was gunned down by two motorcycle-riding men at about 9:30 p.m. of Jan. 3 in Barangay Bugto, Lezo town, eight kilometers west of this capital town.

The victim, who was on board a black motorcycle, was on his way to his parents' house to meet an uncle who had arrived from Canada when the suspects waylaid him along the national highway.

Augusto Tolentino, dyKR station manager and chair of the Kapisanan ng mga Broadkaster sa Pilipinas Aklan chapter, said the victim may have been killed by persons who were affected by his exposé and commentaries.

Emily Ureta, the victim's wife, said her husband had been receiving death threats and his activities monitored by unidentified persons since August.

Police admitted that they have yet to determine the identity of the suspects and the motive for the killing.

Supt. Oscar Aycocho, Aklan police director, said he would form a task force to handle the Ureta case.

The task force would be composed of policemen from the Provincial Police Office, the Lezo police station and the Criminal Investigation and Detection Group.

National Bureau of Investigation agents based in Iloilo also arrived in Kalibo yesterday to help in the investigation as requested by Miraflores.

Terror stalks land reform beneficiaries in Digos City

DIGOS CITY—"They shot us like (we were) chickens."

Farmer Federico Napone, 59, who was given a piece of land in a coconut plantation identified with Eduardo "Danding" Cojuangco Jr. in Sulop town, recalled how his sons Reynaldo and Nilo tried to seek cover behind coconut trees as plantation guards fired at them at about 9 a.m. Wednesday.

Nilo was killed and Reynaldo was wounded.

"They really intended to kill us," Napone said.

The Sulop police reported that three of the possibly eight assailants surrendered. Police later said, however, that the three were just "invited" for questioning.

Police said the farmers, including the Naponeses, were tending to the land the Department of Agrarian Reform (DAR) awarded them in 1997 when the guards arrived and opened fire.

A security guard hired by another group of beneficiaries and posted some 600 meters from the crime scene told reporters he heard guards of the Cocoa Investors Inc. (CII) fire their shotguns as they were approaching the Naponeses and the other farmers.

"They were already firing their guns as they walked toward the area," said a guard who requested not to be named.

The CII guards refused to talk to reporters.

But Vic Ang, CII's external counsel, said the guards were just defending themselves.

He claimed that the guards were escorting some employees "to . . . their usual farm jobs" when they saw Napone's group "in ambush position."

"(The guards) were basically acting in self-defense. The intruders were so numerous in number and armed . . . with shotguns, bows and arrows and other weapons. Our employees were outnumbered 1 to 20," he said.

Napone said they had bolos but were not able to use them because they were already shot at.

SPO4 Anacleto Rasay, chief investigator in Sulop, said the guards gave a version similar to Ang's during a casual conversation.

"They would not talk under investigation without their lawyer," Rasay said. Written statements from the security guards have yet to be taken, he said.

But Rasay said no firearms were recovered from the crime scene.

Napone said what happened Wednesday was the "most serious" incident of harassment they experienced in the hands of the CII since June.

"Sometimes, they harvest our coconuts, including the young ones. Their intention really is to drive us out of our land, he added."

Pedro Aredidon, chair of the CII Sulop-Macasaet State Agrarian Reform Beneficiaries Association (SMSARBAI), said the incidents of harassment that they experienced compelled them to hire guards, too.

Aredidon wrote the DAR central office for assistance "because we could no longer bear the harassment (being committed) against us by the CII management."

Napone, a former CII worker, said the land was officially awarded them in February 1997.

He said he, his son Reynaldo and the rest of the 71 beneficiaries were given Certificates of Land Ownership Awards (Cloas).

But Ang said the Cloas were cancelled sometime last year in favor of 59 CII workers who were still active at the time the plantation land was put under CARP coverage.

Ang said Napone's group, "illegally entered the area in June 2000, erected shanties and since then were illegally harvesting coconuts." *Allan Nawal, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

Eruption, rebellion, typhoons hammer South Luzon

YEARENDER

LEGAZPI CITY—The world famous Mayon Volcano in Albay unleashed its fury on Jan. 4, sending thousands of residents at its foot into panic and spewing out ash 6 kilometers into the sky.

Earlier on the same day, 12 New People's Army guerrillas killed a member of the Mindoro Occidental Provincial Police Mobile Group in Barangay Fatima, Mamburao, some 15 kilometers from the town proper.

On the same day, pieces of property worth about P200 million were lost to two fires in Legazpi City and Sorsogon. Five fires in as many days destroyed property in Lucena City since Jan. 1.

Mayon Volcano

The Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology (Phivolcs) said the Jan. 4 eruption was phreatic or steam-driven. On Feb. 29, "volcanic bombs"—burning rocks as big as houses—were let loose by the volcano and came rolling down the slopes of Mayon, giving the volcano an orange glow in the darkness of the night.

Mayon continued to act up until September, but the Phivolcs warned that the volcano is still restive.

The Albay Provincial Disaster Management Office warned of possible lahar flows that could endanger the lives of 5,145 families in 32 lahar-prone barangays.

The Phivolcs said some 30 million cubic meters of new volcanic materials were deposited at the slopes of Mayon during its recent eruptions. Half of these debris could be loosened by rains.

A BLANKET of ash hangs over Legazpi City following the eruption of Mayon Volcano Feb. 29, 2000. FILE PHOTO

Lahar from Mayon's slopes has already caused heavy siltation in seven rivers at the volcano's foot, causing floods.

Floods

Floods were frequent not only in villages around Mayon but also in low-lying areas, especially near bald mountains or abandoned mining areas.

In the first week of February, strong flood currents killed five persons. Before the year ended, typhoon Ulpiang triggered landslides and flashfloods that killed seven persons in the two Camarines provinces.

The typhoons that cut across Southern Luzon also damaged hundreds of millions of pesos worth of crops and infrastructure.

Insurgency

The NPA's Romulo Jallores Command in the Bicol region claimed that it had won several battles.

Based on INQUIRER reports, the NPA killed 133 soldiers, police officers, military and police assets, militiamen and civilians in Bicol, the last casualties being two Army soldiers gunned down by the NPA on Dec. 31 in Legazpi City.

The PNP Bicol Regional Office filed 22 various criminal cases against 41 NPA rebels in the region.

Chief Supt. Marcelo Navarro Jr., Bicol police chief, claimed victory against the rebels. At least 18 rebels were killed, seven surrendered and 20 were captured.

In Southern Tagalog, the rebels raided town halls, ambushed policemen and soldiers, burned equipment, especially those of firms that won't pay taxes to the NPA.

For more than a year now, the NPA's Melito Glor Command has been holding captive as prisoners of war Army Maj. Noel Buan, former intelligence officer of the Southern Luzon Command, and Supt. Abelardo Martin, chief of police of Dolores, Quezon.

Illegal drugs, fishing

On Aug. 24, a combined team from the military, police and other agencies, with the help of villagers, caught six Chinese nationals unloading 365 kg of shabu, estimated to be worth P730 million, from a speedboat in Barangay Bignay, Sariaya, Quezon.

It was the biggest haul in the government's fight against drug trafficking.

In Bicol, the PNP stepped up its fight against drug abuse in the region, resulting in the arrest of 123 persons believed involved in the drug trade. At least 135 villages were declared drug-free.

The Bicol Regional Maritime Police Office had admitted that illegal fishing methods continue to thrive in the coastal areas of Masbate, Camarines Norte and Camarines Sur.

In Southern Tagalog, non-government groups denounced illegal fishing, especially in western Batangas and in Tayabas Bay.

Coco levy

After 18 drafts and almost two years of consultations with farmers and planters, President Estrada signed on Nov. 8 Executive Order No. 313, which lays down the guidelines on how to dispose of the P100 billion coconut levy fund that was forcibly collected from farmers during the Marcos dictatorship.

Farmers, however, dubbed it a sham, saying "it only aims to create an illusion among the more than 20 million coconut farmers across the country that the struggle for the return of the coconut levy fund is now over."

The Ugnayan ng Magsasaka sa Quezon claimed that EO 313 is merely an attempt to win support for the embattled President Estrada.

Losses

Southern Tagalog lost three political leaders in 2000. On March 19, former Speaker Ramon Mitra died of liver cancer at the age of 72. Former Sorsogon Gov. Juan Frivaldo, the longest serving governor in the country, died at age 85 of cancer in May in Sorsogon, Sorsogon. On July 2, Palawan Gov. Salvador Socrates died with Maj. Gen. Santiago Madrid, Armed Forces Western Command chief and 10 others when their plane exploded in mid-air and crashed into the Sulu Sea. Socrates' body was never found.

Non-government groups in Southern Luzon have been active in demanding the resignation of President Estrada.

Mr. Estrada appears oblivious to the protests, declaring during a visit on Dec. 16 that he would want to retire in Palawan. *Floreño Solmirano, Rolly Embile, Rey Nasol, Job Belen, Juan Escandor, Reynaldo Jamoralin, Delfin Mallari Jr., Arnel Avila, Joel Jabal, Dominique Tabora, Gerald Ticke, Romulo Ponte, Tony Macasinag, Dennis Maliwanag and Mei Magsino, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

NPA rebels burn bus for not paying 'taxes'

NAGA CITY—Suspected members of the New People's Army burned a passenger bus at 12:30 p.m., Thursday, in Barangay Pinagdapian, Del Gallego, Camarines Sur, the provincial police office here said yesterday.

The bus, belonging to the Superlines company and with license plate number DWF 201 and body number 497, was on its way to Naga City when some 25 NPA guerrillas flagged it down.

Deputy provincial director Julian Juanillas said the NPA guerrillas burned the bus because the owners of the Superlines failed to pay taxes to the guerrillas.

But Juanillas said he had no knowledge of how much the NPA was demanding in taxes.

He said the rebels did not harm the passengers but simply asked them to alight from the bus and made them board another bus going to Naga City.

Juanillas said the rebels ordered the bus driver identified as Arnel Omides, 39, of Daet, Camarines Norte, to maneuver the bus to the left shoulder of the Quirino Highway. When the bus was parked, the rebels burned it.

He said the Bureau of Fire Protection of Del Gallego town responded before the bus was destroyed and saved its four tires.

A day earlier, police officers who were on their way to fetch the image of the "Nuestra Señora de Peñafrancia" from Naga City were fired at by about five NPA rebels who had pre-positioned themselves along the Maharlika Highway near the crossing in Barangay Alanao, Lupi, Camarines Sur.

A police team led by Insp. Crisanto Paac and SPO2 Jose Dioso of the 5th Police Regional Mobile Group, however, escaped the guerrillas' ambush, according to Chief Supt. Marcelo Navarro Jr., Bicol police chief.

"The rebels withdrew toward different directions after a brief encounter, leaving behind a pair of slippers, food wrappings and assorted bullet shells of different calibers," Navarro added.

He said the team was on board two police service cars bound for Naga City to fetch the image of the Nuestra Señora and bring it to Camarines Sur when fired at by the rebels at about 9:30 a.m.

The religious image is being brought around the Bicol region for its thousands of devotees. *Juan Escandor Jr. and Rolly Embile, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

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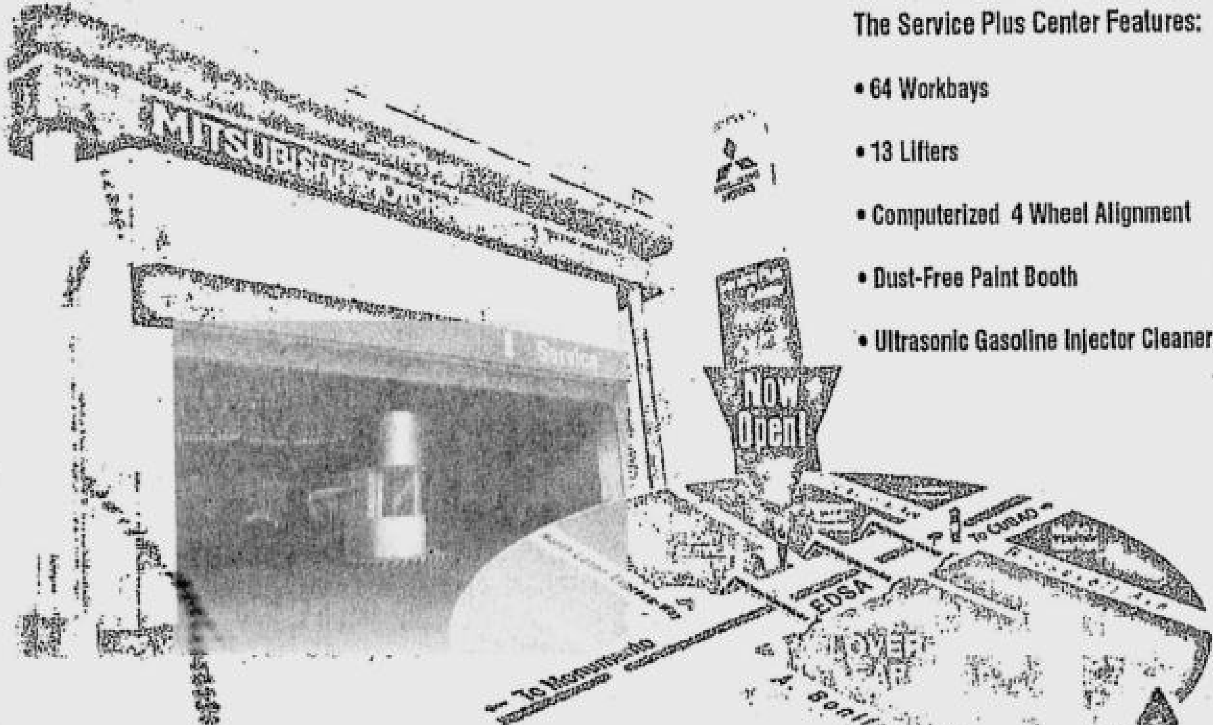

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INQUIRER Visayas
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When good men depart

PRESIDENT Estrada lost two of the last few good men in his government with the back-to-back resignation of former defense assistant secretary Ruben Carranza and interior assistant secretary Alex Padilla.

While it is true that Carranza and Padilla held only "minor" posts in the bureaucracy, as the President stressed to downplay the impact of the latest desertions, I doubt whether Mr. Estrada can find replacements big enough to match their ideals and intelligence.

BREAKAWAY

Ivan P. Suansing

With Ruben helping shape policy, the Armed Forces of the Philippines has become more relevant to its role as "protector of the people." His last official act was to recommend the abolition of the new "private armies," special militia units that hadn't the slightest connection with counter-insurgency.

I remember him, boyish and scholarly with his thin-rimmed eyeglasses, confronting the commander of the Army special forces who trained in Cebu shortly before the start of the war against the Moro Islamic Liberation Front and warning the battle-scarred officer of sanctions for harboring three of his men who had been tagged in a Mactan golf club murder.

He confronted the President with a resignation letter that stung: I can't proceed in the direction of public service as the President goes astray.

Ruben, who writes a funny but caustic column for the Cebu Daily News, believes the President is history, regardless of the result of the impeachment trial.

He's right. Clarissa Ocampo's testimony has stripped away the last shred of Mr. Estrada's credibility. An acquittal on a technicality, as when Ocampo's testimony is stricken off the record on the ground of "irrelevancy," will have no bearing in the court of public opinion.

Barring a major miracle, it's all over but the shouting.

* * *

TINGTING LEAVES. Another top Cebuano official, Vicente "Tingting" de la Serna, actually beat Carranza to the punch by quitting a few weeks earlier.

Explaining his decision, De la Serna, deputy executive secretary, cited health problems and Ronaldo Zamora's impending resignation.

But his later statements hinted at disenchantment with a bungled presidency and the futility of staying on. "President Estrada could have done more," he lamented.

* * *

DROPPING RAUL. If the prosecution panel drops the last two charges against the President, the Ilonggos will be deprived of their chance to watch a *kasimanwa* in action at the impeachment trial. They have been anticipating Article 3 on betrayal of public trust where Rep. Raul Gonzalez will be the lead prosecutor.

Gonzalez, the former Tanodbayan who once "raided" the Sun.Star Iloilo office for writing an unfavorable article against him, is no legal pushover. He's expected to try his best not only to ensure the President's conviction but also to showcase his litigation skills before a nationwide audience and bolster his reelection chances.

Interestingly, Gonzalez has been penciled in to contest the lone congressional seat in Iloilo City against Archie Santiago, the eldest son of Senator Miriam.

* * *

NO FRIENDS. Long-time allies Iloilo City Vice Mayor Guillermo de la Llana and former councilor Jerry Treñas have parted ways, and, as usual, politics is the culprit.

After patiently waiting for three seasons, De la Llana is shedding his bridesmaid role and moving up to claim the throne to be left vacant by another three-termer, Mayor Mansueto Malabor. But guess who's waiting in ambush?

Treñas, who was clobbered by Malabor in the last polls, has joined his former nemesis to oppose De la Llana, a well-loved dentist who catches mentally ill patients when he's not entertaining swarms of indigent residents in his City Hall office.

In the polls, it will be a battle between De la Llana's popularity and Treñas' Master Plan, something the noted member of the Iloilo business community failed to sell in his last outing.

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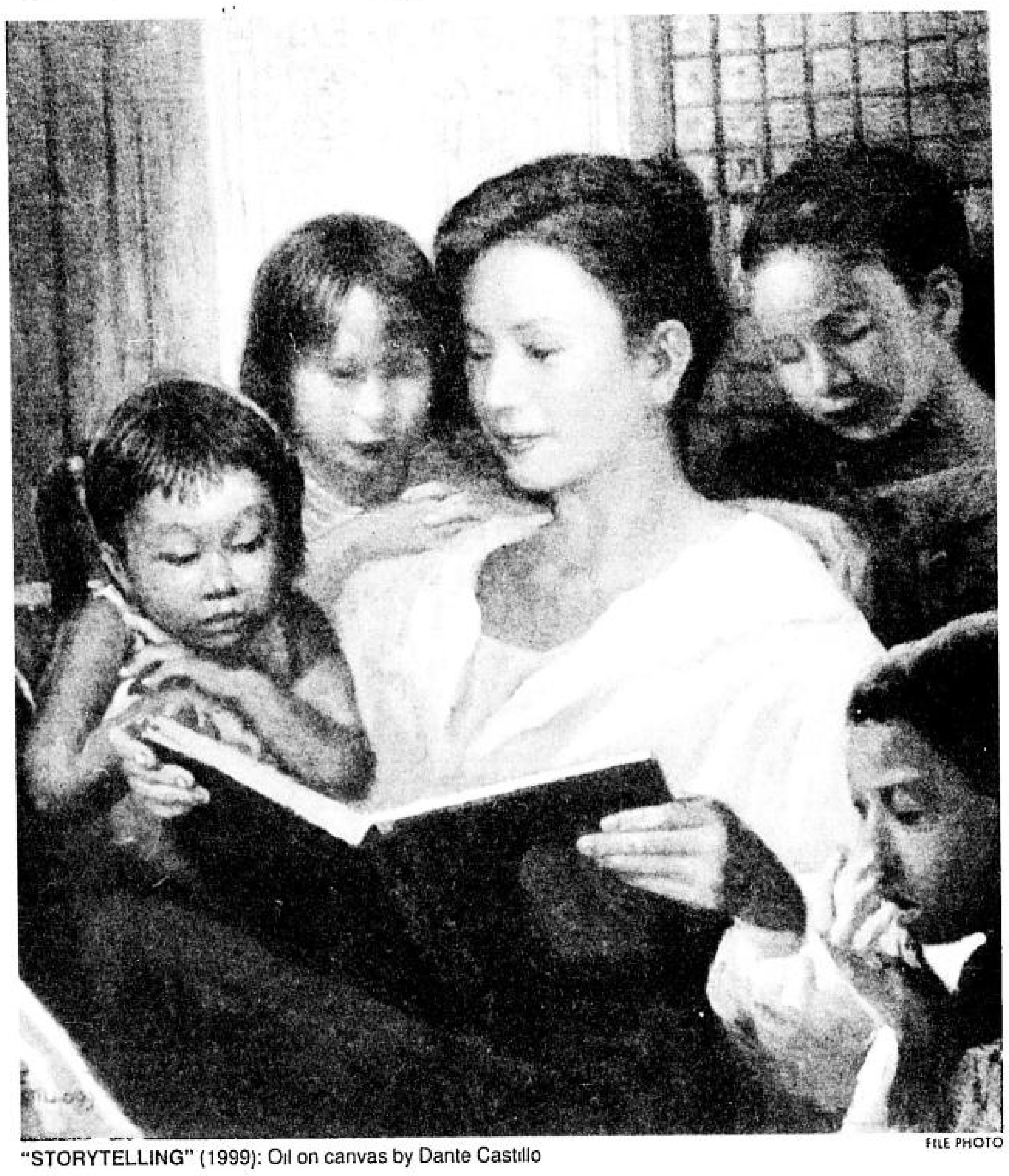
Never-ending folk art of storytelling in Waray

By VICENTE LABRO
Tacloban City

ONCE upon a time, children in Filipino homes would huddle before bedtime for one of their favorite pastimes—storytelling.



"STORYTELLING" (1999): Oil on canvas by Dante Castillo

FILE PHOTO

Usually told by an elder member of the family, stories about a *prinsipe* (prince) and a *prinsesa* (princess), *duwendes* (dwarfs) and *higantes* (giants), and *diwatas* (fairies) and *aswangs* (witches) would fill the kerosene lamp-lit room as children take a journey into a make-believe world.

Legends, fables, the adventure (or misadventure) of an imaginary local character and true-to-life stories of famous people were also among the tales that children love to hear.

Storytelling is one of the Filipino oral traditions; the folk-art is passed on from one generation to the next.

Storytellers acquire their skill to narrate a tale and hold the young listeners' attention from years of listening to the same stories when they were still young.

They could mimic many voices and make any sound. They would move their eyes and hands, or soften their voices or shout to give emphasis to what they were saying.

Stories were told either from the storyteller's memory or by reading a book. Storytelling was one of the children's forms of entertainment, and most often they would learn a moral lesson from the story.

It was then a ritual in every home, an enjoyable episode during the growing-up years of the kids.

But that was long ago.

For more than a couple of decades now, storytelling seemed to have been slowly vanishing as a folk art. Many blame the competition from mainstream popular culture for the decline of interest in storytelling. The cinema, radio, television and home video have caught the interest not only of the young but also of the adults.

Computer games and the Internet are now taking most of the time of the new generation.

Pokemon culture

Visit an ordinary home in an urban area today and chances are, you would see early in the evening all the adults glued to their seats and watching the impeachment trial and popular soap operas on television. On the sideline are children, eagerly waiting for their turn to see "Pokemon."

Many of their counterparts in the rural areas, however, still practice and enjoy this age-old tradition of storytelling.

Long before the coming of the Spaniards, there already exist in Samar and Leyte a rich oral tradition.

Jesuit historian Francisco Alcina wrote in 1668 of the existence of the *paracandu* or a person who recounts historic events through verses. Alcina also mentioned the *ambahan*, *bical*, and *balac*, all poetic forms wherein the participants exchange verses.

The early Warays, the priest-historian said, also had the *canogon* for mourning the dead, the *siday* or *luwa* (poems) for expressing love, and the *titigoon* (riddles) for games, and the *sareta* or *susumaton* (stories) for ordinary gatherings.

But the more than four centuries of colonization have resulted in the loss of most of the Warays' oral traditions.

According to Charo Nabong-Cabardo, a local historian who also conducted a research of the ancient culture in her native Samar, the Spanish colonizers branded these poetic forms as pagan culture and slowly, these "disappeared from the collective consciousness of the colonized people."

She revealed that the only ones among the early Warays rich oral traditions that survived were the *balac*, which is now known in Samar as *ismayling*, the *titigoon*, *siday* and *susumaton*.

"These remaining oral traditions of the Warays should be preserved and nurtured," said Nabong-Cabardo, who was one of the judges of the Salaysayan 2000 contest held at the University of the Philippines in Tacloban City in June last year.

The Salaysayan 2000 was the first storytelling contest in the country and was initiated by the Philippine Board on Books for Young People (PBBY). The competition was aimed to preserve and enrich the art of storytelling, and to encourage children and young adults to read good storybooks written by Filipinos and other authors.

But apart from those who took part in the contest, many young people may have never heard of the tales about the *prinsipe* who has a *ngahan nga singsing* (magic ring), and of the exploits of a legendary warrior who could move fast from one place to another.

They may have heard tales of the adventures of the witty Juan Pusong (the Warays' equivalent of Juan Tamad, which is narrated live in one of the radio stations in Tacloban). But they do not know the tales of the giants that once roamed Samar, nor of the men of great strength and courage who save villages from wicked people.

These stories have fired the imagination of their forebears who, as children, would eagerly wait for the daily storytelling session. Every evening, they would gather in one corner of the room, and quietly listen to their elder start the story: *"Usa ka adlaw hadton una nga panahon, may-ada prinsipe nga . . . (Once upon a time, there was a prince . . .)"*

'Barrio Museum' rises in Mandaue City

By BEN SALGADO
Cebu City

ONE of the country's smallest but significant repositories of history is the Quijano Museum in Barangay Cabancalan in Cebu's Mandaue City.

HAYAHAY

At 24, the curator, Ritchie Landis Quijano, is one of the youngest to have managed to put a rich storehouse of turn-of-the-century cultural artifacts.

Equally impressive are revolutionary *filipiniana* collection, ethnic tribal artifacts and modern works of art that Ritchie inherited or has amassed since he officially opened the place to the public in 1996.

The presence of the Quijano Museum is notable to a big city like Mandaue, which has no other museum, while neighboring Cebu City has more than 10.

The Quijano Museum is listed in the Visayan Association of Museums and Galleries and is described simply as a "Barrio Museum." Ritchie proudly states it as "the first and only in the city."

"It was just a little after college studies that I pursued setting up a museum because I couldn't get a job, or perhaps no one seems to want to hire me," he surmised.

Tall and lanky with soft curly long hair, a goatee and an artist's demeanor, Ritchie followed the calling of his soul and began the task of curating artifacts he inherited from his grandfather, Candido Quijano.

Candido was a collector, naturalist and musician. Except for the musical skill, Ritchie possesses the talents of his grandfather. Candido had left a bulky German accordion and a rare acoustic guitar with a crafted metal pick guard.

Homely atmosphere

When he started displaying old hardwood cavans, photographs, maps, fossils, religious altar pieces and World War II items, Ritchie's relatives, neighbors and family friends donated other pieces for his keeping.

Soon, more interesting artifacts filled up the spaces, like old farm implements, ethnic musical instruments, clothing and hunting weapons, coins, stamps and art works that were acquired and entrusted.

CURATOR Ritchie Landis Quijano and two of his museum pieces.

BEN SALGADO

Set in a very homely atmosphere, the Quijano Museum requires little maintenance. Ritchie charges a measly sum of P20 per visitor (P10 for students) to pay for electric bills and fixtures.

Ritchie's main source of livelihood comes from writing for local newspapers about cultural happenings and doing commissioned art works.

A good sampling of his eclectic art pieces make up the gallery, aside from paintings and photographs of noted Cebuano artists.

Nowadays, university students, artists and foreign visitors visit Barrio Museum. Since the museum's present site is quite inaccessible to residents of Cebu and even Mandaue, Ritchie plans to move to another area where his artifacts and art collections will create more impact to the community.

Moribund

"More of the museum visitors come from Cebu City as I would liken Mandaue as culturally moribund," Ritchie said.

Mandaue also does not have decent parks or playgrounds, he said. Most of the historical landmarks, he noted, are neglected, like the Bantayan sa Hari, which can be seen from the old Cebu-Mactan bridge.

The Bantayan used to appear in the seal of the old Mandaue. It was replaced recently with a symbolic image of the bridge.

"There was a time when restoration work took place and the result was even more disastrous. The government had good intentions but was ill-advised about the plan. It should have been left to experts," Ritchie lamented.

He added cheerfully though that if Mandaue would invest in setting up a museum, he has a workable plan of how it can instill a distinct culture that is really Mandaue's.

As for his museum, Ritchie said, "It will survive."

PNP pins bombings on MILF

(From page A1)

In a three-page referral to the justice department, Senior Supt. Raul Bacalzo, Metro Manila director of the CIDG, claimed that Salamat hatched the recent bombings as part of a "Feasibility Project."

The alleged project, outlined in an undated document, detailed "bombings and economic sabotage in Metro Manila," said Bacalzo, who added that police authorities retrieved the document from Camp Bushra in Lanao del Sur.

The alleged plot was supposed to be carried out by 12 mujahideen (freedom fighters) within 30 days, the officer said, citing the document.

Bacalzo said the PNP believed that the alleged plot was aimed at shifting the media's "complete attention" away from the Mindanao conflict—an outcome already achieved by President Estrada's impeachment trial.

According to him, the rebels believe that the casualties they inflict on the military are "obviously meaningless as these can't be published or broadcast."

In an affidavit attached to the referral, Chief Insp. Eduardo Davalan, commander of the 4th Scout Ranger Battalion, claimed that Murad himself had a copy of the document.

Once more

Neither Bacalzo nor Davalan indicated when the PNP got hold of the document. They did not say either if the police obtained the "project" paper before the May 17 Glorietta bombing, which injured several people, and the May 21 SM Megamall attack, during which a janitor was killed.

In June, Salamat and 33 other MILF officials were charged with murder in connection with bomb attacks in the two shopping malls.

But amid accusations that the Moro rebels were being used as scapegoats, Malacañang asked the DOJ to drop the charges against Salamat and a number of the MILF officials to facilitate the resumption of peace talks with the separatist rebels.

Jaafar, Murad and Mimbantas are the MILF vice chairs for political affairs, military affairs, and internal affairs respectively.

Abbas

Abbas, 38, was arrested by PNP-CIDG agents in Pasig City, while alighting from his green Tamaraw FX in front of his house on Wednesday.

He is a cousin of MILF lawyer Macapanton Abbas and Bangsa Moro Party leader Firdausi Abbas.

Bacalzo said Ismael Abbas was positively identified by eyewitness Radjie Lambatin as the man who alighted from a red Mitsubishi Lancer near a warehouse at the international airport around noon on Dec. 30. Bacalzo also said the PNP had around 10 witnesses to back the story.

Three other policemen executed affidavits to say that Abbas resembled a cartographic sketch of one of several suspects who have been under surveillance for the last two weeks.

Outside Manila

Earlier, PNP chief Director General Panfilo Lacson said the police had pinpointed the group responsible for the attacks and identified the bombers, including their leader, based on photographs shown to witnesses.

"They have slipped out of Manila and we are chasing them," Lacson said. "It's just a matter of arresting them because they have been identified by name."

Asked if the bombings were related to the Mindanao conflict, Lacson said, "Yes."

He said he had "physical evidence" pointing to the bombers and has submitted a report to President Estrada.

He earlier said that a foreign-trained group of terrorists was behind the bombing spate.

The Abu Sayyaf has also denied involvement in the apparently precision-timed bombings that struck a commuter train, a gas station, the airport, a plaza and a bus.

Cory hits Erap

At a protest and prayer rally for the bombing victims in Makati City yesterday, former President Corazon Aquino took to task President Estrada for the Rizal Day blasts.

"We are here to demand of the administration that it fully disclose what it knows of the persons or parties behind (the attacks)," she told some 2,000 people gathered at the intersection of Ayala Avenue and Paseo de Roxas.

Aquino said the failure of authorities to prevent the attacks despite a surfeit of intelligence funds was puzzling.

"With all the intelligence funds at its command, we find it hard to believe that a major terrorist operation such as this could have gone unnoticed and unchecked by those in charge," she said.

"Who should be the first one to know of such terrorist act? Who has the funds to check or as others say, to carry out such extensive bombings?" she added.

Aquino, the last of several speakers on a makeshift stage set up in front of the bronze monument of her late husband, Sen. Benigno "Ninoy" Aquino Jr., offered help to bring the perpetrators to justice.

"When Ninoy was slain, I prayed that this wouldn't happen again to anybody else. I know how the families of the new martyrs feel. I share their grief. Rest assured, I would help them in whatever way I can so that the perpetrators of this heinous crime would be unmasked," she said, her voice cracking.

No bomb strong enough

"That day, they robbed us not only of the lives of our countrymen and brothers. In targeting peaceful and ordinary citizens, they only robbed us of normalcy in our lives, of any illusion that despite the political and economic crisis we may be going through, the common Filipino would be spared its worst effects," she said.

But she added that the bombings would never cow her or the people into giving up their search for the truth.

"To the doers of this evil deed, we say today, you have not succeeded. You will not prevail . . . No bomb will ever be strong or large enough to kill the spirit."

Political figures who were also at the rally included Vice President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, Congressmen Roilo Golez and Heherson Alvarez, former Internal Revenue Commissioner Liwayway Vinzons-Chato, former Undersecretary Josefina Lichauco and Solita Monsod.

The rally, organized by Kongreso ng Mamamayang Pilipino (Kompil II), was also joined by the Makati Business Club, Akbayan, Bigkis Pinoy, Bayan, KMU, Courage, Gabriela, Erap Resign Movement, among other organizations. *With reports from AP, Reuters*

Ping peeved by AFP raid

(From page A1)

in the Armed Forces of the Philippines."

The police chief said in a radio interview that the military, conducting its own investigation into the bombings, did not consult police before the raid in the Culiat neighborhood. *(See story on Page A1.)*

But AFP Chief of Staff Gen. Angelo Reyes said the military had coordinated with local police.

Lacson said that the raid by the Intelligence Service of the Armed Forces of Philippines (Isafp) had compromised the police operation against suspected bombers.

"The backlash is that the operation was disrupted," he said.

"There were some leaders and members whom we have identified. We do not know what effect this will have on the follow-up operations we are undertaking outside Metro Manila," Lacson added. *Alcuin Papa, AP, AFP*

Military frees 20, says 'sorry for the inconvenience'

(From page A1)

Reyes said he was conducting the briefing "to disabuse the minds of critics that the arrests are directed against our Muslim brothers."

"We don't want people inconvenienced," he added.

He told reporters that the military was "releasing the people who have nothing to do with illegal firearms," adding that four of the suspects would be detained pending further investigation.

Sixteen of the 20 were freed around 3 p.m., while the other four were brought to the Quezon City Prosecutor's Office, which decided to conduct a preliminary investigation into charges of illegal possession of weapons, according to the suspects' lawyers.The four were freed hours later, the lawyers said.

Reyes refused to outline accusations against the four. He added that they belong to a group, but did not disclose its name.

The general, who was accompanied by the Isafp chief, Lt. Gen. Jose Calimlim, at the briefing, said the military conducted the raid on the strength of a search warrant issued by Executive Judge Florentino Tuazon Jr. The raid, explained Reyes, was based on reliable "information" received by the intelligence service.

Planting business

The military officials also said the raiding team was accompanied by local barangay officials and it duly coordinated with the PNP Tandang Sora detachment, although human rights groups have said that the barangay officials were belatedly called.

He said the raiding team had confiscated an M-16 automatic rifle, one .38 revolver, five M-16 magazines, 110 rounds of ammunition and two sachets of shabu.

Reyes also denied charges that the weapons were planted by the intelligence agents.

"That's not true. We are not in the planting business. We are not the Department of Agriculture," he quipped.

The men detained Thursday were mostly janitors, security guards and factory workers.

13 years old

One of those arrested was 13-year-old Jamel Abtah, who immediately ran to his home at 117 Cotabato St. in Culiat after the released men alighted from an Isafp coaster around 3:30 p.m.

The boy said he was frightened when the soldiers arrived and rounded up the men. But he did not bear any anger.

"I don't blame them for it. It was my fault. Our door was open and they must have seen me sleeping," the young Abtah said innocently.

He said he was just angry because the soldiers were incessant (*makulit*) in asking him questions about the bombings and in insisting that he was involved.

Punzalan said he and his neighbors were blindfolded from the time they were arrested—between 2 and 3 a.m. Thursday—until 2 p.m. that same day.

Numbers

Initial reports said 17 men were detained. Reyes said the number was 18, while Tess Dimalag of Task Force Mindanao said 20 had been rounded up.

Seventeen were arrested in the predawn raid on a boarding house at 113 Cotabato St. in Barangay Culiat. But the Isafp team also arrested Moner Sulayman, Esrael Hamsilan Jr. and 13-year-old Abtah from two nearby houses.

The authorities released 16 of them around 3 p.m. yesterday while Misuari Panayaman, Akas Edsel, Romano Salik and Sulayman were released two hours later.

The others were identified as Efren Mamintal, Rahib Lumalag, Danny Kusain, Legaspi Nanimbong, Alvin Kinal, Sammy Unsi, John Menor, Jepoy Abdullah, Realah Mohamad, Frederick Punzalan, Arnold Montong, Allan Akmad, Mohamad Balambag and Miranda Unutan, 26.

TFM, the Moro Human Rights Center, the Ateneo Human Rights Center, and other members of the Philippine Alliance of Human Rights Advocates worked for the victims' freedom.

"We are not thanking Isafp for releasing these people," said Firdausi Abbas, a leader of the Bangsa Moro Party and one of the victims' lawyers.

"After consulting with the victims, we most probably will file charges of illegal arrest and kidnapping against those involved in these men's arrests," he added.

What's wrong

But Reyes defended his men, saying: "We are conscious of (the suspects') rights. There has been no violation of their rights. There is no witchhunt here. The raid is positive, so what's wrong with that?"

There was no lack of answers from Muslim and human rights groups.

The Office of Muslim Affairs yesterday raised its concern that apparently random arrests of Muslims may only further strain ties between Muslims and Christians.

OMA Executive Director Acmad M. Tomawis warned that innocent victims of random arrests could resort to violence or take up arms.

"We have been working hard to bring back confidence of Muslims in the military following the recent war in Mindanao. But now our work has gone to naught," Tomawis said in a telephone interview.

He said 100 Muslims from Culiat went to his office yesterday morning, expressing fear for their lives. "They fear that they will be salvaged (summarily executed). I told them to be calm, that I will help protect their rights," said Tomawis, the first ranking official of the Estrada administration to denounce the arrests.

Following the detention, Tomawis said, he immediately sent OMA officials to Culiat to do a background check on those arrested.

"We found out that these people are innocent and their names did not even appear in the search warrant," he said.

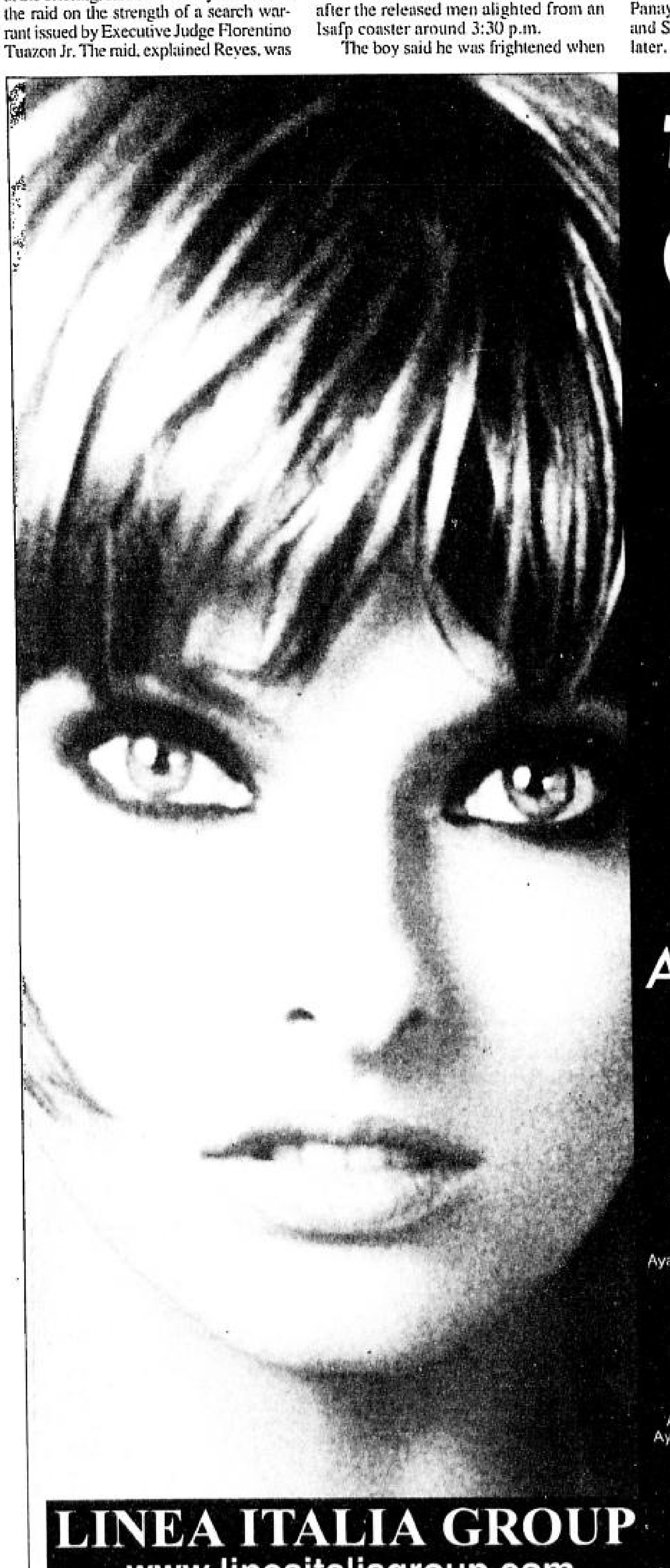
Responding, however, to charges by some sectors that the government is "anti-Muslim," Tomawis disagreed, saying that the President has initiated programs beneficial to Muslims, such as scholarship programs.

Paranoia

Senate President Aquilino Pimentel said the arrests reveal "the paranoia of people in power who are probably attempting to show the public that they can solve any and all violent crimes by arresting Muslims, just like the Nazis pinning blame on the German Jews in Hitler's heyday."

Muslim employees in government also added their voices to the din of protest. The spokesperson of the Muslim Sariah condemned the arrests as a "gross violation of the rights of the Moro people."

In Mindanao, more groups accused the government of using Muslims as scapegoats. The ecumenical Promotion of Church People's Response, the militant Bayan in Northern Mindanao, and the human rights group Karapatan were among those who expressed outrage. *With reports from Armand Nocum, Andrea Trinidad-Echavez, Gerald Lacuarta; Froilan Gallardo, Carolyn O. Arguillas, Jowel F. Canuday and Nash B. Maulana, PDI Mindanao Bureau; AP, AFP*



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'Loi got ₱8M from Chavit'

(From page A1)

In their joint SAL for 1999, the President and the First Lady declared a net worth of only P35.8 million, notwithstanding the alleged P1.2-billion savings and current account of Mr. Estrada in Equitable PCI Bank under the name of "Jose Velarde."

The prosecutors submitted the documents to the impeachment court for "stipulation" but Mr. Estrada's defense panel asked for more time to review the documents.

Defense lawyer Siegfrid Fortun expressed surprise when presented with the proposed stipulation.

"I must confess that this is the first time that I've seen even the supporting documents on the matter. If Prosecutor Arroyo would allow us up to Monday to make a decision on the matter," Fortun said.

Arroyo agreed, saying that the prosecution did not want to catch the defense panel by surprise.

The prosecutors sprung the surprise on the defense panel to bolster their allegation that the First Lady had received "jueteng" money from Singson.

Singson earlier testified that Ejercito received P20 million in cash in August 1998 but he added that she had been unaware of the source of the money.

Singson said the money was part of the P130 million that he and Charlie "Atong" Ang delivered to the residence of the President on Polk Street in Greenhills.

The money came from the P200-million in tobacco tax, which the President ordered released to Ilocos Sur on condition that he would get a kickback, according to Singson.

Signature cards

Photocopies of documents obtained by the INQUIRER showed that the new set of evidence consisted of eight pages and included Citibank deposit slips, relationship opening forms, signature cards and checks paid to the First Lady and presidential friend William Gatchalian.

Listed under exhibit "FFFFFFF" was a deposit slip for a total of P8.41 million for Ejercito's account No. 166850 at Citibank Greenhills.

The P8.41-million deposit consisted of an P8-million check payable to cash and a P410,000 check.

The deposit was made on Oct. 4, 1999.

Both checks, Nos. 0001388 and 0800431030, came from an account of Singson with Metrobank Ayala Center branch.

The deposit slip listed the book balance of Ejercito's account at that time at P11,895,132.17 and an available balance of P3,495,132.17.

Another piece of evidence was a certified as a "faithful reproduction of the microfilm of Metrobank Ayala Center branch Check No. 0001388 dated Sept. 29,1999 in the amount of P8 million deposited with Citibank Greenhills branch."

The certification was made by Norberto L. Siongco, records management division head of Citibank N.A. Philippines last Jan. 4.

The paper trail also included the "account opening form-individual" which the First Lady accomplished on July 17, 1985.

Mayor's wife

Under the heading "introduced/identified by:" Ejercito listed "wife of Mayor J. Estrada."

Reference was waived for the account.

Documents submitted to the impeachment court included a deposit slip showing Metrobank Check No. 1332 deposit of P46,350,000 in Gatchalian's favor on Aug. 20, 1999.

The deposit slip said that the money should be credited to the account of Gatchalian with Account No. 8131201377.

Siongco also certified that the check was authentic.

The "relationship opening form-personal" showed that Gatchalian was a "walk-in" and "convenience" client. He opened the account on Aug. 13, 1996 with an initial deposit of P2.75 million.

Land Bank Vigan manager

At the trial yesterday, Elizabeth Balagot, manager of Land Bank Vigan, testified that Singson ordered the transfer of P130 million to the private accounts of Delia Rajas, Alma Alfaro and Eleuterio Tan on Aug. 27, 1998.

Prosecutor Oscar Moreno presented Balagot to prove the alleged receipt by the President of P130 million as kickback from Ilocos Sur's share of the tobacco excise tax.

Balagot said Rajas and Tan tried to encash P90 million from Westmont Bank (now United Overseas Bank) in Mandaluyong. When rejected, they encashed the check at Land Bank Shaw Boulevard, Mandaluyong, the following day, the same day Alfaro managed to withdraw her P40 million from the same bank.

Balagot testified that Singson on Aug. 27 sent his two representatives Maricar Paz and Marina Atendido to encash a P170-million check issued in the governor's name.

When the bank asked for time to come up with cash, Singson's provincial administrator called up to ask that five demand drafts, which can be encashed immediately, be issued.

Balagot said she denied the request because the bank was not issuing demand drafts payable to cash.

She said the administrator called again to issue the demand drafts in the names of Rajas (P30 million and P20 million), Tan (P40 million), Alfaro (P40 million) and Nuccio Saverio (P40 million).

Another instruction said that instead of issuing a demand draft to Alfaro, the P40 million was to be deposited instead to her Shaw Boulevard account.

Balagot said the three demand drafts for Rajas and Tan were issued.

She said that on Aug. 28, her branch received a call from Westmont Bank in Mandaluyong that Rajas and Tan were trying to encash and later deposit their Land Bank demand drafts with the bank.

She said she did not allow the encashment because it should only be done with Land Bank Makati branch.

She said the demand drafts were already endorsed by Emmanuel Puno of Westmont Bank.

She said she talked with Singson on the phone and told him about the attempt to negotiate with Westmont.

She said Rajas and Tan then persisted that they wanted to encash their demand drafts with Shaw Boulevard because they found it risky to do this in the Makati branch.

But she said she ordered the cancellation of the demand drafts and instead had P90 million deposited in the accounts of Rajas and Tan with Land Bank Shaw.

Moreno presented documents to prove that Rajas, Alfaro and Tan opened accounts with Land Bank Shaw on Aug. 27 and 28, and withdrew the money on Aug. 28 as soon as it came.

Moreno said the accounts, which were opened with initial deposits of P1,000, were closed on Dec. 3 and 8.

Defense lawyer Fortun asked if she ever heard the names of Charlie "Atong" Ang and President Estrada in connection with the P130 million.

She said no.

Voluminous documents

Fortun also made it clear that the instructions about the transfer of the P130 million all came from Singson and his authorized representatives.

Earlier, Moreno taxed the patience of the court by going over volumes of documents relating to the release of P200 million from the Department of Budget and Management to Land Bank Vigan.

Ma. Lorena Flores, manager of Land Bank Malacañang, also testified that the DBM released P200 million on Aug. 26, 1998 for Ilocos Sur to be used for a tobacco curing and redrying plant in Santa town. It was the province's share from Republic Act 7171 which mandates that 15 percent of the excise tax on tobacco be given to Virginia tobacco-growing provinces.

It took Moreno two hours to confirm with Flores the authenticity of the documents.

LTO records

Eleonor Madrid, head of the license division of the Land Transportation Office, also testified that the LTO has records of Jose Victor Tan Uy.

Senate President Aquilino Pimentel Jr. earlier told the impeachment court that the Senate blue ribbon committee had discovered that Eleuterio Tan was actually Uy of Cebu.

Uy was said to be an incorporator of the same Power Mgt. Consultancy Inc. owned by Ang.

The records custodian of the Social Security System testified yesterday that Delia Ilan Rajas, one of three people who withdrew P130 million allegedly given as kickback to Mr. Estrada, was employed by Ang of Power Management and Consultancy Inc.

Gwen Marie Judy Samontina, head of the SSS records division, said documents submitted by Rajas in her application for SSS membership showed that her employers included Ang, who was listed as "security officer" of Power Management.

Aside from Samontina, other witnesses were presented to trace the paper trail from the DBM to Land Bank Shaw Boulevard where the P130 million was withdrawn.

From Land Bank Vigan, the money was said to be deposited in three private accounts in Land Bank Shaw Boulevard and withdrawn by Rajas, P50 million; Alma Alfaro, P40 million; and Eleuterio Tan, P40 million.

Singson had testified that these three were Ang's people, and that it was Ang who personally handed the money to the President.

Aside from Power Management, Rajas also listed her other employers as Admate Company Inc., Energetic Security & Specialists Inc., Jetro Construction & Development Inc.

Movement of Landbank funds traced

(From page A1)

aimed at corroborating Singson's earlier testimony that he diverted provincial funds to the bank accounts of the people identified with the President's friend. Charlie "Atong" Ang, for eventual turnover to the President.

Only part of story

But the paper trail testified on by Balagot constitutes only part of the story. It represents only the Malacañang to Vigan portion of the money flow and the circumstances under which the public funds of Ilocos Sur were transferred to the accounts of private persons.

It remains to be seen whether Caridad Rodenas, manager of the Shaw Boulevard branch, whose testimony was suspended due to lack of time, will supply the information to prove the delivery of the money to the President at his Greenhills residence, as testified by Singson.

Parallel to its move to establish the manner by which Singson allegedly gave

the President his "share" of the excise taxes, the prosecution has started to prove Ang's links to the people who withdrew that money from Landbank.

Links

Through the records of the Social Security System, which were submitted by Gwen Samontina, the prosecution has shown that Delia Rajas is an employee of Power Management and Consultancy Inc., a corporation owned and managed by Ang.

In the case of Eleuterio Tan (also known as Victor Tan Uy), the prosecution put Eleanor Madrid on the witness stand to validate the record of the driver's license of Tan with the Land Transportation Office.

He is the same person whom Senate President Aquilino Pimentel Jr. earlier identified as one of the incorporators of the same corporation that Rajas wrote in her SSS documents as her employer.

Although the connection of the two other recipients of public funds, Lucio Saberio and Alma Alfaro, have not been established in the same degree as those of Tan and Rajas, there is now sufficient basis for the prosecution to argue that Tan and Rajas acted as dummies of Ang in withdrawing the money from Landbank.

According to Singson, Ang was the man whom the President designated to deliver to him his "share" in the excise tax released to Ilocos Sur. In effect, Rajas and Tan are the agents of Ang whose principal in this particular transaction is no less than the President.

Disclaimer

The defense was aware of the prosecution's objective in going through a detailed explanation of the processes the P170 million underwent at the Vigan

branch. Since Balagot's testimony was supported by bank documents that are difficult to refute, there was little the defense could do but show that the two personalities, the President and Ang whom Singson mentioned as involved in the scheme ever got into the picture.

So the defense asked Balagot if, in the process of canceling, substituting and replacing the checks issued for the P170 million, she received any instructions from Ang or President Estrada.

Not surprisingly, Balagot answered in the negative. Ang and President Estrada were not involved according to her. With that answer, what remains on record is all transactions covering the money at the Vigan branch were made upon Singson's orders.

When the defense gets the opportunity to cross-examine Rodenas, it is almost a certainty that the same question regarding the participation of Ang and the President in the Shaw Boulevard Branch's end of the transaction will be raised. With possibly the same reply as Balagot's.

Cordial

Compared to last Thursday, the proceedings in yesterday's hearing went smoothly. There were no emotional outbursts or sideshows that diverted the public's attention from the true purpose of the impeachment trial.

The contending lawyers made several stipulations (a process where the parties agree on the existence of a certain fact without need of further proof) about the bank documents that were supposed to be testified on by Lorena Flores, manager of Landbank's Malacañang branch.

The stipulation saved as much as two hours of the impeachment court's time and spared the senator-judges the trouble of sitting through a boring discussion of how the bank documents concerned went through the bank's processing mill.

The lawyers who conducted the direct and cross-examination of the witnesses were extra courteous to each other. Unless it involved fundamental issues, they showed willingness to agree to shortcuts in the procedures to shorten the proceedings.

The atmosphere of cordiality can perhaps be traced to the fact that two principal lawyers, Rep. Joker Arroyo and lawyer Estelito Mendoza, celebrated their birthdays yesterday *(See story on Page A1.)*

Dichaves summoned; George Go rebuked

(From page A1)

used to keep hundreds of millions of pesos in bribes.

The Senate impeachment trial summoned Dichaves to appear by Monday to explain why he should not be punished for claiming he was the true owner of the Jose Velarde account, which Clarissa Ocampo, senior vice president of Equitable, said was set up by the President.

George L. Go was criticized by his successor Equitable PCI Bank chair Ricardo Romulo for saying that the bank had suffered a run and that it was "not over the hump."

Reports of a bank run caused Equitable shares to fall P1.50, or 2.7 percent, to P53.50 yesterday.

Malicious intent

"There appears to be a deliberate and malicious intent on the part of Mr. Dichaves to mislead and make a mockery of the proceedings of the impeachment court," Senate President Aquilino Pimentel Jr. said.

On Dec. 18, Dichaves sent a letter to the impeachment court saying he was the true owner of an Equitable PCI Bank account held under the name of "Jose Velarde."

Four days later, Ocampo testified that on Feb. 4, 2000, she saw President Estrada sign the name "Jose Velarde" to the P500-million trust account.

Dichaves signed on Dec. 13 several other documents that would have transferred ownership of the account to him, according to Ocampo.

She said it was Go, then Equitable chair, who directed her to prepare the second set of documents transferring the account to Dichaves.

Ocampo said the documents were antedated to Feb. 4, 2000, the day the President opened the account, and were signed in the law office of defense lawyer Estelito Mendoza.

But the arrangement fell through because the President did not sign the letter-authority transferring the account to Dichaves.

Ocampo and Go had claimed that Equitable PCI Bank had no hand in the attempted cover-up.

Prosecutors have been trying to link the account, and several others, to allegations that Mr. Estrada received huge bribes from illegal gambling lords and skimmed off government funds.

Go is out

As for Go, Romulo said the former Equitable chair was not in a position to talk about the bank's finances as he had already stepped down.

"George Go has, since Dec. 19, been out of the bank as both director and chairman, and therefore has no current, much less accurate, information about the bank's operation," Romulo said in a statement.

The statement did not say whether the bank, which prosecutors in the impeachment trial against President Estrada claim is a repository of funds that were illegally paid to him, has been experiencing unusual levels of withdrawals.

Go said depositors had withdrawn P3.2 billion, or about 1.8 percent of total deposits.

He clarified that the amount withdrawn by depositors was not P32 billion as erroneously reported by Reuters.

Go admitted that Equitable, the country's third biggest lender, suffered a run "to some degree" but expressed confidence that "it will weather the storm."

But he said the bank "will not recover overnight."

Go, an associate of Mr. Estrada, stepped down to shield the bank from accusations that it may obstruct the Senate in its prosecution of the President.

His family still owns 30 percent of the Equitable PCI Bank.

Go also resigned as treasurer of the Erap Muslim Youth Foundation after Ilocos Sur Gov. Luis "Chavit" Singson alleged that the foundation was used by the President to launder P200 million in "jueteng" money.

Go couldn't immediately be reached to confirm his comments printed in the INQUIRER on Jan. 5, though Rafael Buenaventura, governor of the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas, said Equitable PCI Bank had not sought assistance to cover withdrawals.

"They have not approached us," Buenaventura said.

Wilfrido V. Vergara, president of Equitable, said in a separate statement that the bank "remains fundamentally sound."

No conspiracy

Romulo also denied orchestrating a campaign against the President, a charge Mr. Estrada made on Wednesday.

"There is no conspiracy between Equitable PCI Bank and the Makati Business Club to oust President Estrada," Romulo said in another statement.

Romulo is also chair of the Makati Business Club (MBC), an organization of chief executives of the country's biggest companies, which has called for Mr. Estrada to resign.

The President said the conspiracy against him was well orchestrated especially because Romulo, the MBC chair, is also the chair of Equitable PCI Bank.

The President also pointed out that the private prosecutors in the impeachment case belonged to the Romulo Mabanta law office, the law firm of the MBC chair.

Two Equitable PCI executives and other bank employees have testified for the prosecution in the impeachment trial.

Withdrawal

Also yesterday, Pinoy Times reported that more than P500 million was withdrawn from the Velarde account of the President on Dec. 5, or two days before the impeachment trial began.

But Equitable neither confirmed nor denied the report.

Elbert Zosa, senior vice president of Equitable, said "the bank cannot divulge any information to the public until ordered by a court." *Reports from AFP, Bloomberg and Elena Torrijos*

Mendoza, Joker: So alike yet so different

(From page A1)

former Executive Secretary Catalino Macaraig and former National Labor Relations Commissioner Froilan Bacungan.)

Yesterday, Arroyo and Mendoza both marked their birthdays—a revelation occasioned by a motion made by Senate Majority Leader Francisco Tatad before the trial started.

Tatad said Arroyo marked his birthday on Thursday, and Mendoza, yesterday. But in acknowledging Tatad's motion, Arroyo said it was also his birthday yesterday.

"We greeted each other (happy birthday) a few days ago," Mendoza said during the break at the Lorenzo Sumulong room.

Opposing sides

The ties that bind aside, the two legal eagles have consistently been on opposing sides.

"Titong (Mendoza) has always been with the establishment, while Joker has always been a street parliamentarian," said Prosecutor-Rep. Sergio Apostol.

Mendoza, a product of the public school system, studied at UP from high school until he acquired his law degree *cum laude*. He later completed his master's degree at the Harvard Law School.

"I've always been in practice," said Mendoza, who served as solicitor general and justice minister during the Marcos dictatorship.

He is reputed to be the highest paid lawyer in the country these days, counting as clients former first lady Imelda Marcos, and Mr. Estrada's friends Mark Jimenez, Lucio Tan and Eduardo "Danding" Cojuangco.

In contrast, Arroyo was a staunch anti-Marcos human rights lawyer during martial law before he served as executive secretary to President Corazon Aquino. He was the first lawyer to challenge Marcos' martial law before the Supreme Court.

On his last term in the House of Representatives, Arroyo is a member of the opposition minority.

Mendoza recalled that while he was Ferdinand Marcos' solicitor general, Arroyo was lawyer of ex-Sen. Benigno Aquino Jr.

At one point, he said, Arroyo asked if he could meet personally with his client. He said he acceded to Arroyo's request.

When the Aquino administration came to power, Executive Secretary Arroyo returned the favor by helping Mendoza get a passport.

"I couldn't renew my passport, but Joker helped me," Mendoza said.

Rivalry

Arroyo also has a former ally who is now on the opposite side of the fence.

Former Chief Justice Andres Narvasa, head of Mr. Estrada's defense panel, recalled that he and Arroyo were at the forefront of the struggle to defend those illegally arrested under the Marcos dictatorship.

"We filed all the *habeas corpus* cases then. And each time, it would be Titong, who was solicitor general then, who would answer," Narvasa recalled.

This was how Narvasa described the rivalry between Arroyo and Mendoza: "It gives (each) personal satisfaction *pag naiisahan yung isa* (to put one over the other)."

So what were the birthday wishes of the co-celebrators, in whose hands lie the fate of the President?

"It is my birthday wish that the President is acquitted, and that we finish all of these now," Mendoza said.

Arroyo was less sentimental. He holed up in the prosecutors' office, and rushed out to the session hall an hour later with a brief message: "You are all beautiful."

Miriam conciliatory . . .

(From page A1)

But Chief Justice Hilario Davide Jr. deferred action on Santiago's motion to withdraw, saying that it appeared to be "conditional" and that two congressmen had written letters to the impeachment court about the incident.

An enraged Santiago had accused Aboitiz, Fores and Jimenez of unruly behavior and demanded that they be expelled and cited for contempt.

The senator-judges, after a closed-door meeting, ordered the three escorted out and banned from attending the trial.

One letter, written by Iloilo Rep. Raul Gonzales, protested the decision to ban the three from ever watching the proceedings as "rather arbitrary and appears to be more severe than the punishment for direct contempt."

The "respondents should have been afforded some form of due process, not just because of the accusation of . . . Santiago. In fact, authority says that in contempt, there should be 'willful disregard or disobedience of the court's orders'," said Gonzales who said he was writing not as a prosecutor, but as a citizen and a member of the Bar.

Another congressman, Isabela Rep. Heherson Alvarez, said that he also wrote a letter to Davide assailing the decision.

"It was not the right decision. It was a summary judgment and was arbitrary because the three never stood up and did not even look at Santiago," Alvarez said in a telephone interview.

At most the three should have been cited for indirect contempt and if that was the case, there should have been a hearing, Alvarez said.

Settlement

Another problem cropped up when Sen. Teofisto Guingona, who was supposed to have transmitted the offer of an apology, said he had been merely exploring the possibility of a settlement.

But Santiago, who appeared to have been mollified, said that she was filing a motion for reconsideration for the three to be allowed back to attend the trial because of the supposed offer conveyed by Guingona.

She told the court that though many might have been surprised by the "vehemence" with which she insisted on the rule of silence, she said this rule was imposed in all courts because of the necessity for the judges to focus on what the witnesses and the lawyers are saying.

She ended with a warning that "Left-wing radical extremists" were seeking to exploit the situation by playing one sector against the other like the prosecution against the defense, the rich against the poor, President Estrada against Vice President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo.

Santiago's outburst last Thursday, however, was roundly criticized by lawyers, teachers and militant groups. The Concerned Lawyers for Moral and Effective Leadership (Clamor) said Santiago's behavior was "undignified and scandalous" for which she should apologize "to the whole nation."

Davao

In Davao City, the lawyers' group Dismiss Now Erap! called on Santiago to inhibit herself from being a judge in the trial as she has allegedly failed to hide her partiality for Mr. Estrada.

The Teachers and Employees against Corruption and Hypocrisy said Santiago's assumption of materialistic motives among graduates of the University of the Philippines only proved "how corrupting any association with (President) Joseph Ejercito Estrada can be."

TRO

Santiago yesterday won a measure of victory in the Supreme Court which issued a temporary restraining order to stop militants from staging protest actions both at her house and office.

The high tribunal banned the Akbayan party list group and "all others similarly minded" from "holding any public assembly of any kind at any time" in the vicinity of Santiago's house or office for the duration of the impeachment trial. ***With reports from Michael Lim Ubac and Blanche S. Rivera in Manila and Jowel F. Canuday and Carolyn O. Arguillas, PDI Mindanao Bureau***

Davide gets death threat

(From page A1)

find you guilty for (sic) the crime of betrayal of public trust.

"Therefore you are hereby sentenced to suffer the penalty of death, together with your family and relatives," Davide read from the letter.

He added the preceding paragraphs accused him of being anti-Estrada, and said he did not believe the letter had come from the Vice President's office.

He told the court he "cannot be threatened by anybody."

"I will perform my duty to the best of my ability even if it would call for the sacrifice of my own life."

Davide has won praise for his evenhanded conduct of the trial.

Macapagal now leads an opposition coalition seeking to have Mr. Estrada removed on charges of receiving huge bribes from illegal gambling bosses, skimming off government funds and protecting friends from government regulators.

In a statement last night, the Office of the Vice President condemned "in absolute terms" the death threat sent to Davide.

"It is obviously another product of the vicious black propaganda campaign" against Macapagal, the statement said. ***Martin Marfil and AFP***

Erap wants . . .

(From page A1)

and financial issues are getting in the way of the bidding for the Automated Counting and Consolidation of Results System (Accors).

The snag just might result in the scrapping of the project aimed at preventing a repeat of *dagdag-bawas* (vote padding and shaving) and speeding up the counting of votes in the May elections.

The President aired his wish during a luncheon Thursday with officials of the National Citizens' Movement for Free Elections (Namfrel).

Jose Concepcion Jr., chair of the poll watch group, said he and Cebu's Ricardo Cardinal Vidal had agreed that despite "all the problems he is facing right now," Mr. Estrada appeared sincere in this desire.

Concepcion said Mr. Estrada wanted to be remembered as the Philippine President who pushed for clean and automated elections.

According to Concepcion, this will give the people hope that the Estrada administration will not try to meddle in the results of the nationwide elections.

Demetriou

But Harriet Demetriou, outgoing chair of the Commission on Elections, yesterday issued a memorandum saying she "cannot approve" the technical evaluation results on the Accors project.

She cited the issues raised by Comelec director Ma. Angelina Matibag, who questioned the membership of the prequalification awards and bids committee (PBAC) and the manner by which the evaluation report was prepared.

Matibag said the report, done by the Department of Science and Technology, should be signed by members of the Comelec's technical committee and not by PBAC members.

She said the report must also be supported by individual fact sheets and scoring sheets duly signed by members of the technical committee.

Matibag, herself a PBAC member, complained that the report had landed on her desk for signing when she had neither been invited to nor participated in the discussions despite repeated requests for her presence.

"If I sign, I may not be able to defend my action," she told Demetriou.

Matibag also cited the wide disparity between the funds available for the project and the price bids submitted by prospective contractors.

She said the Comelec's chief accountant, Zita Buena-Castillon, had certified that only P500 million had been appropriated for the project, but that the price bids were higher.

"If all the financial bids are over and above the certified available funds for a project, a failure of bidding must be announced," Matibag said.

Ateneo-Ana fight for last semis slot

STANDINGS	W	L
Shark	8	2
Welcoat	7	3
Montaña	6	4
Blu Sun Power	6	4
Hapee	5	5
Ateneo-Pioneer	4	6
Ana Freezer	4	6
Osaka	3	7
PharmaQuick	2	8

Games Today (Makati Coliseum)

2 p.m. Letran vs Spring Oil (PYBL)
4 p.m.—Ana Freezer vs Ateneo-Pioneer

By Dennis U. Eroa

ATENEO-PIONEER clashes with Ana Freezer Specialist today with the winner advancing to the PBL Challenge Cup semifinals at the Makati Coliseum.

Both the Blue Eagles and the Freezer Specialists finished the eliminations with 4-6 win-loss cards and the 4 p.m. do-or-die encounter is peppered with drama and excitement.

Ana Freezer team owner Rudy Mendoza watched in delight last Thursday as Osaka Iridology derailed Ateneo-Pioneer's march to the next round with a 66-59 win.

"It was a new lease on life," said Mendoza. This is the second straight time that Ana will need a playoff in order to make the next round.

Despite the Osaka setback, Ateneo-Pioneer isn't going to throw in the towel. "We'll never let it slip into our hands again," said team manager Nato Calung.

In a show of determination, Ana, which beat Ateneo-Pioneer in the eliminations, brings back playmaker Robin Mendoza, who had a forgettable stint in the PBA. Mendoza played a crucial role in Ana's (then Dr. J) stunning victory over powerhouse Tanduay in the 1998 Centennial Cup.

Though still out of sync, Mendoza will help remedy Ana's weak backcourt. Jake Agleron, Rey Mendez, Ariel Capus, Roland Pascual and Ronald Tubid will have their hands full against Ateneo's swarming defense.

Ateneo pins its hopes on the power plays of Enrico Villanueva and Rich Alvarez. The duo has the edge over Marvin Ortiguerra.

It must also get fiery showing from Wesley Gonzales, Rainier Sison, Edrick Ferrer and Andrew Cruz in order to break Ana's fearsome zone.

After losing to Osaka, cynics questioned the Blue Eagles ability to sizzle during big games. Beating Ana will convince the doubters.

Meanwhile, the PBL Commissioner's Office has given Tristan Codamon till Jan. 9 to settle his contractual obligations with Blu Sun Power.

Codamon faces a suit for breach of contract after joining the PBA annual draft without the approval of Commisioner Chino Trinidad as provided for in the PBA-PBL-MBA memorandum of agreement.

BAP PREXY

POC recognizes Jalasco–Dayrit

By June Navarro

THE PHILIPPINE Olympic Committee would stick it out with ousted basketball chief Freddie Jalasco. At least for now.

"Since the POC has yet to receive a written communication stipulating a change in the Basketball Association of the Philippines leadership, we will still recognize Jalasco as head of the BAP," said POC president Celso Dayrit yesterday after emerging from the Olympic body's first executive board meeting for the year.

Aside from the letter of complaint furnished by Jalasco to the POC and the Philippine Sports Commission, Dayrit said the BAP hierarchy has remained silent over the issue.

In the said letter, Jalasco questioned the legality of the BAP elections held on Dec. 22 where Gonzalo "Lito" Puyat was elected BAP president in absentia.

"Once we receive a letter from the BAP, which includes the notice of their elections, that is the only time we could lay our hands on the case," said Dayrit, who stressed the BAP should notify the POC that a change in its leadership transpired.

Only cycling and weightlifting, whose embattled leaders earlier sought help from the Olympic body, will be given due attention by the POC, Dayrit added.

He said the POC investigative body tasked to look into the imbroglio of cycling and weightlifting must submit its findings before Jan. 17.

Also in the meeting, the POC also confirmed the appointment of various committee heads and the approval of the Southeast Asian Games guidelines in Kuala Lumpur.

Dayrit said the POC executive board overwhelmingly agreed that at least a bronze-medal experience would be the barometer for the selection of the national athletes bound for the biennial games in September.

He also got back against Boni Alentajan, saying the BAP executive vice president has no personality in the POC and is not in a proper position to declare the absolute independence of the BAP from the Olympic body.

Alentajan, the POC's legal counsel during the time of Gen. Rene Cruz (ret.), said Thursday the POC has no right to interfere with the affairs of the BAP. He added the POC could only intercede if the trouble is between national sports associations.

Dayrit, however, refuted Alentajan's claim, pointing out that the BAP as a member of the POC has its responsibilities to the organization.

Jalasco has reportedly called off the BAP general meeting he set today.

Kobe Show in LA

NBA NOTES

Henry Liao

SHAQUILLE O'Neal is the NBA's reigning Most Valuable Player but on the LA Lakers team, the Big Fella is only No. 2 insofar as point production is concerned.

Not only is Shaq not the Lakers' numero uno scorer but he's also not even the prime offensive option on his own team.

In Lakersville this season, it has become the Kobe Show with the Shaq as the added attraction. Yet coach Phil Jackson knows the club's success will ultimately depend on the dominant performance of O'Neal inside the paint.

Bryant, who has had larger annual increases in scoring average than any other player in the NBA, leads the league in scoring with a Jordanesque-like 29.7-point clip. Though the points are the highest in his five NBA seasons, the 6-7 swingman has taken more field attempts than ever, averaging 22.8 shots per game that is the most in the majors this season.

Give the 22-year-old Bryant, who earned NBA Players of the Month honors for December when he normed 32.3 points, 4.8 rebounds and 4.9 assists in catapulting the Lakers to an 11-5 record, some credit. The cocky but talented kid also is shooting a career-high 47.5 percent from the field aside from contributing 5.0 rebounds and pacing the club in assists (4.7 apg) and steals (1.55 spg).

During the 1999-2000 wars, when Shaq was the Lakers' primary go-to guy and topped the NBA in scoring while helping guide the Pacific Division franchise to its first league crown since 1988, Bryant averaged only 17.9 floor attempts per game, shot 46.8 percent and knocked in 22.5 points in 66 assignments.

O'Neal's probably upset that Bryant has gotten more than his share of shots that became up for grabs following Glen Rice's departure to New York this campaign.

Even though Kobe is the early frontrunner for the MVP award, Shaq's numbers are still up there among the NBA leaders. He's fifth in scoring (25.58 ppg), second in rebounding (13.1 rpg to Atlanta's Dikembe Mutombo's 13.6), second in blocked shots (3.26 bpg to Philadelphia's Theo Ratliff's 3.70) and first in field goal percentage (.354).

At their current pace, Bryant and O'Neal could become the sixth different duo since 1970-71 (when the NBA instituted a four-division format) to rank in the top 10 and combine for 50 points or more, joining Lou Hudson and Pete Maravich, who accomplished the feat with the Atlanta Hawks in 1970-71 and 1972-73; Gail Goodrich and Jerry West with the LA Lakers in 1971-72; Bob McAdoo and Randy Smith with the Buffalo Braves in 1965-76; Alex English and Kiki Vandeweghe with the Denver Nuggets in 1982-83 and 1983-84; and Larry Bird and Kevin McHale with the Boston Celtics in 1986-87.

Additionally, Kobe and Shaq could become only the fourth pair in NBA history to rank among the league's top five scorers, duplicating the trick of Hudson (fourth) and Maravich (fifth) in 1972-73, English (first) and Vandeweghe (second) in 1982-83 and Vandeweghe (third) and English (fourth) in 1983-84.

SPORTS ON TV

COMPILED BY LORENZO MANGUIAT

BASKETBALL: NBA - Seattle Supersonics vs Philadelphia 76ers at 8 a.m. (r- 8 p.m.) on ESPN and Orlando Magic vs New York Knicks at 4 p.m. (r) on Star Sports
NBA Action at 10:30 a.m. (r - 7:30 p.m.) on ESPN
US NCAA – Duke Blue Devils vs Florida State at 4:30 p.m. (r) Indiana Hoosiers vs Wisconsin Badgers tomorrow at 1:30 a.m. (r) on ESPN
NBA Inside Stuff at 6:30 p.m. (r) on Star Sports
Chinese National Basketball League at 11:30 p.m. on Star Sports
AMERICAN FOOTBALL: Super Bowl XI Highlights - Oakland Raiders vs Minnesota Vikings at 7 a.m. (r) Super Bowl XII Highlights - Denver Broncos vs Dallas Cowboys at 4 p.m. (r) on ESPN
BOXING: Great Fights of the Early 1900s at 10:30 (r) on ESPN
WRESTLING: WWF Raw at 9:30 a.m. (r) on Star Sports

Knicks nip Magic in OT

NEW YORK—Marcus Camby had 22 points and 12 rebounds, but his biggest contribution was playing defensive stopper against Tracy McGrady as the New York Knicks beat the Orlando Magic 95-92 in overtime Thursday night.

The Knicks held their opponent below 100 points for the 27th consecutive game—one shy of the NBA record—and Camby was a big reason why. Defending McGrady one-on-one on the perimeter for much of the second half and overtime, Camby forced Orlando's leading scorer to miss three shots and commit a turnover on four of the Magic's final five possessions.

McGrady finished with 36 points, 20 of which came in the first half before Camby was switched onto him defensively. McGrady scored the Magic's first six points of overtime but was shut out the rest of the way as the Knicks extended their longest winning streak of the season to six games.

Allan Houston led New York with 24 points and seven assists, and Latrell Sprewell had 20. The Knicks won despite allowing the Magic to score the first 15 points of the game.

Darrell Armstrong scored 15 for the Magic, who dropped to 0-5 this season when playing on national television.

Complete Results: Miami 81, New Jersey 78; New York 95, Orlando 92, OT; Minnesota 105, Seattle 92; Houston 107, Detroit 97; Chicago 98, Washington 96. *AP*

Cuban fined $250,000

DALLAS — The National Basketball Association tried ruining Mark Cuban's first anniversary as owner of the Dallas Mavericks by fining him $250,000 for taunting officials and practically daring the league to punish him.

Lewis-Harrison bout set

LÓNDON—Lennox Lewis and Audley Harrison will meet by mid-January to discuss promotional possibilities for Britain's Olympic superheavyweight boxing champion.

Imminent talks will decide the extent of the professional relationship between the world heavyweight champion—winner of an Olympic gold in 1988—and the Sydney gold medalist.

And, if Lewis is to handle—or at least advise—Harrison in his paid career, it is looking likely that the pair will box on the same bill in America in April.

The Harrison situation explains why Lewis has not outlined his immediate plans to American cable network Home Box Office, who are keeping an April 7 date open for Prince Naseem Hamed's clash with Mexico's Marco Antonio Barrera.

"By next week Lennox will have mapped out his plans," Lewis' business manager Adrian Ogun said Thursday.

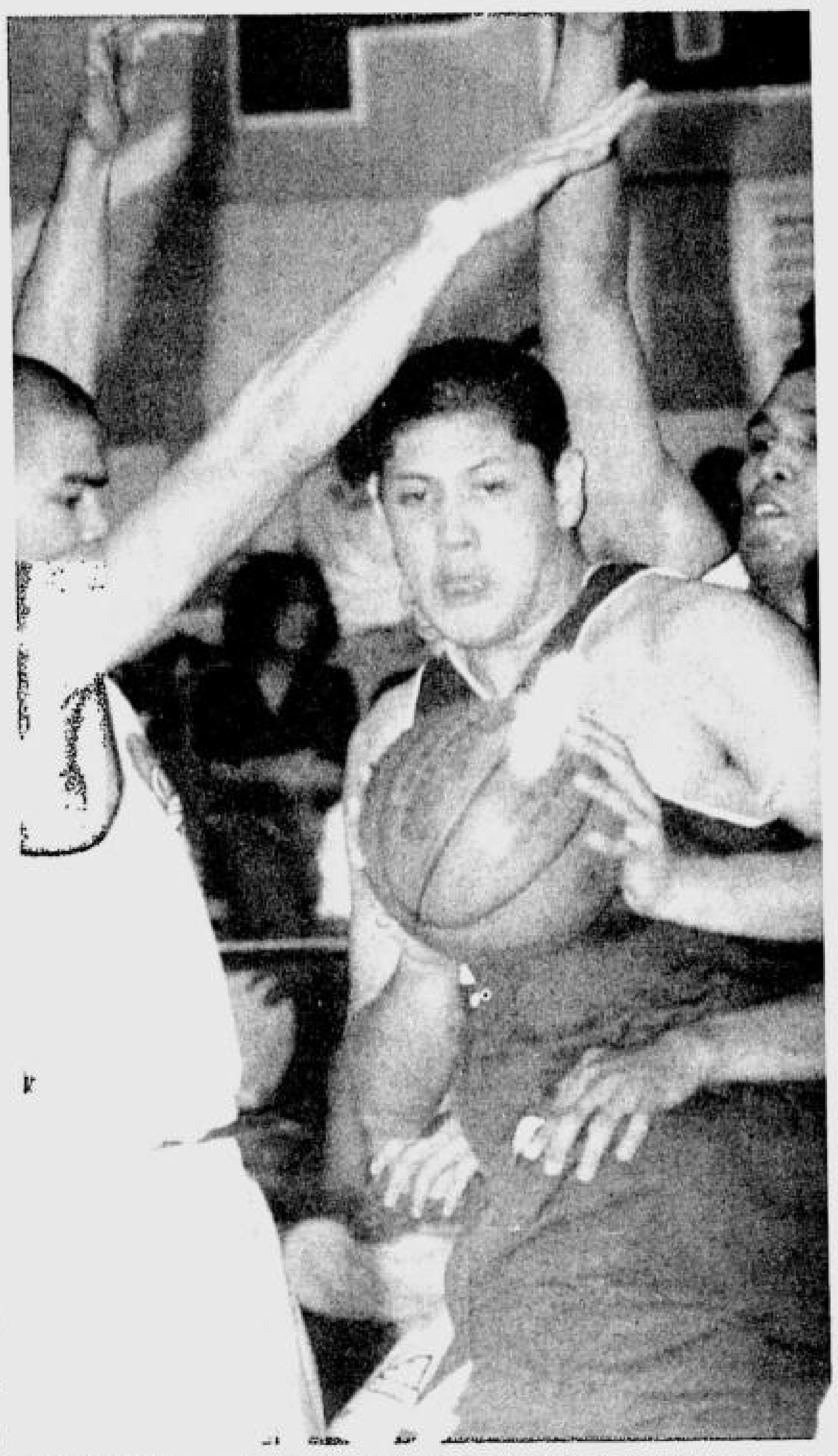
"Before any announcement is made, Audley has asked Lennox to meet him around mid-month.

"They will get together and then reveal their plans—whether Lennox will be going on his own without Audley, or with Audley. *AFP*

RACING TIPS

AT SAN LAZARO BY MR. 999

Race 1—1. King Scholar 2. Shuttle's Rianne/Red Hahn 3. Dynamite Jack
Race 2—1. Native Talent 2. Dr. Jones 3. Gifted Galloper 4. Time Capsule
Race 3—1. Walk With Saints 2. Hearts on Fire 3. Pep Talk 4. Raging Waters
Race 4—1. El Bulldog 2. Let Me Pass 3. The Fiscalizer 4. Corporate Law
Race 5—1. Bambino 2. Glory Be 3. Spoiler
Race 6—1. Teeney Weeney 2. Pacific Dancer 3. Affectionate 4. Nevada Dancer
Race 7—1. Shuttle's Magic 2. Maniaman 3. Katya
Race 8—1. Very Sharp 2. Bumper To Bumper 3. Adrenalin 4. Anahaw
Race 9—1. Wine and Roses/Gimme A Ring 2. Latin Beat 3. Might and Power
Race 10—1. Fireball 2. Always Remember 3. Lucky Choice 4. With Feeling
Race 11—1. Touch of Luck 2. Imus Emperor 3. Portal Dancer 4. Best Buddy
Race 12—1. Mighty Glow 2. Don Benito 3. Search For Gold
Race 13—1. Palace Hero 2. Silver Gray 3. Queen Jamie 4. Maria Nevada
Race 14—1. Joker's Wild 2. Breathless Charm 3. Fortune Baker/Party Princess 4. Lovely Luigi



ATENEO-Pioneer's Enrico Villanueva, (center) shown here being harassed by Montaña's Jenkins Mesina (left) and Mel Latoreno (right), will play a key role in today's do-or-die match against Ana Freezer. ROMY HOMILLADA

Beermen likely to keep Victoria despite offers

By Marc Anthony Reyes

SAN Miguel Beer is likely to keep Boybits Victoria despite trade offers from other teams led by Tanduay Gold, according to SMB manager Robert Non yesterday.

Non said they want to have an intact team as much as possible when the Beermen, champions in four of the last five conferences, go for the All Filipino Cup which starts Jan. 28.

"It's better to have a complete lineup going for the All Filipino title," Non told the INQUIRER. "It's the only title we missed during the last two years."

Non said Victoria, Danny Seigle, Danny Ildefonso and Freddie Abuda are the only Beermen who have yet to renew their contracts.

However, Non assured that the four players would renew their deals because only small things remain unsolved in their negotiations.

Non said Tanduay has a standing offer to get Victoria's services but the management found it unacceptable.

Victoria, who played as a starter for Pop Cola before accepting his role as stringer to Olsen Racela in SMB, has been griping over his 16-minute per game playing time

His short stint usually begins in the last two minutes of the first quarter and ends halfway in the second quarter and is repeated in the second half.

Just the same, Victoria always makes the most of whatever playing time given him, earning him the Quality Minutes award from the PBA Press Corps.

Meanwhile, Shell Velocity manager Bobby Villarosa said Benjie Paras is not up for trade although the two-time MVP has yet to renew his contract

Villarosa added that they are releasing tough-defending Jay Mendoza and guard Rommel Santos to interested teams

Ferreira gives SA final hope

PERTH, Australia— Wayne Ferreira revived South Africa's hopes of reaching Saturday's final of the Hopman Cup mixed teams tennis tournament when he beat Switzerland's teenage star Roger Federer Friday in the men's singles in Perth.

Ferreira, 29, ranked number 13 in the world, defeated the 19-year-old world number 29 Federer 6-3, 3-6, 6-3 to level the tie at 1-1 after Switzerland's world number one Martina Hingis brushed aside South African veteran Amanda Coetzer.

The tie will now be decided in the mixed doubles, which get under way later Friday. South Africa is the reigning Hopman Cup champion.

Displaying a brand of ruthlessness which swept Coetzer off the court, Hingis won in straight sets, 6-1, 6-0 in 47 minutes.

Coetzer, 29, ranked 11th, fought gallantly against the 20-year-old superstar, but had no answer to her power serving and precision returns.

"I was a little tired going into the match," said Hingis, who hardly made an error. "I just tried to play my game and it worked very well."

The winner of the tie will clash with Monica Seles and Jan-Michael Gambill of the United States in Saturday's final. *AFP*

ELS (left) shakes hands with France's Jean van de Velde after their World Matchplay duel. Els won on the 19th hole. REUTERS

Els survives thriller

MELBOURNE, Australia —Ernie Els birdied the last two holes and then made an incredible par on the first playoff hole Friday to advance to the quarterfinals of the Match Play Championship and send Jean Van de Velde home on another hapless note.

Els, the No. 1 seed in a tournament missing Tiger Woods and several other highly ranked players, survived another frenetic finish at Metropolitan Golf Club against the Frenchman, who finally got some good luck and still messed it up.

One hole down with two to play, Els holed a 30-footer on No. 17 to square the match.

Van de Velde didn't fold—at least not on the 18th. He holed an 18-foot birdie putt, pumping his fist and gritting his teeth, only to watch Els top him with an 8-footer to force extra holes.

A great match had a wild finish.

Els hit first, well right into shrubs that restricted his backswing toward the pin. Van de Velde, who squandered away the British Open with a triple bogey on the 72nd hole, then hooked it badly to the left and appeared doomed.

But the ball caromed off a tree and bounced back into the bunker, leaving a shot at the green.

Els played for a hard draw and pulled it off, into a bunker but in good shape to make par. That was all he needed when Van de Velde hit his pitch shot the one place that he could not afford—long.

The ball ran past the hole, off the green and down the slope, and he had to make a 5-footer just to save bogey. Els made his 4-foot par putt and advanced to the weekend.

He'll play Craig Stadler, who had a dramatic finish off his own.

The Walrus was 3-down with six holes to play but forced extra holes against Andrew Coltart of Scotland. Coltart hit his approach on the playoff hole to about 15 feet, but Stadler answered with a shot into a foot for the win. *AP*

Fil-Ams get PBA clearance

By Gerald G. Lacuarta

THE BUREAU of Immigration yesterday approved the citizenship applications of four American basketball players who joined the Philippine Basketball Association 2001 draft after they were able to show proof that at least one of their parents was a Filipino citizen at the time they were born.

Immigration Commissioner Rufus Rodriguez identified the four Fil-Ams as Jeremy Aquino Aniciete, 22; David Matthew Friedhof, 23; John Hartley Ward Arigo, 22; and Michael Allen Pasana Hrabak, 21.

The PBA has required foreign-bred players to seek recognition as Filipino citizens from the BI before they can play in the league to prevent a repeat of scandals involving marquee players Paul Asi Taulava, Sonny Alvarado, and Rob Parker who were all deported for faking their citizenship records.

Under the 1987 Constitution, a foreigner whose father or mother is or was still a Filipino citizen at the time of his birth can apply for recognition as a Filipino, thereby enabling him to acquire dual citizenship.

Affirmation

The four Fil-Ams, however, will have to wait for an affirmation by the Department of Justice of the recognition orders issued by the BI before they could be given certificates entitling them to Filipino citizenship.

"By having been recognized as Filipinos, these four Fil-Ams can now play in the PBA and each of them shalbe entitled to all the rights and privileges enjoyed by a citizen of the Philippines," Rodriguez said.

Based on records, Aniciete was born in Chicago, Illinois on Oct. 13, 1978 to Jesus Manuel Aniciete and Perla Aquino who were both Filipinos.

Friedhof, on the other hand, was born in Idaho on June 3, 1977 to one Nena Apaga, a former Filipino, and James Joseph Friedhof, an American.

Hrabak was born at the former Clark Air Base on Aug. 27, 1979 to one Allen Hrabak Jr., a former US Air Force serviceman, and Oona Liza Pasana, a Filipina.

Meanwhile, Rodriguez also directed all foreigners intending to play in the Philippine Basketball League to likewise apply for a working visa with the BI or face deportation.

Rodriguez issued the order after the Games and Amusement Board declared the PBL a professional entity and not an amateur league.

The PBL had previously insisted that foreigners playing in its tournaments were not under the jurisdiction of the BI because they were only amateurs who were not hired to work in the Philippines.

Ateneo, Ana dispute last PBL semifinal slot today A15

SPORTS

AL S. MENDOZA, Editor ▨ EDWIN M. VILLANUEVA, Assistant Editor

ATHLETE OF THE YEAR

Delasin: I'm humbled

By Jong Arcano

"I AM humbled. The award will certainly inspire me to work harder this season."

Thus said lady golfer Dorothy Joy Delasin yesterday after being told that she had just been voted by the Philippine Sportswriters Association as its Athlete of the Year for 2000.

The 20-year-old, who crowned herself the 2000 LPGA Tour's Rookie of the Year, got 55 votes out of a possible 60 as she became the first athlete based in a foreign land to be bestowed the highest recognition of achievement by the country's oldest sportswriting organization.

The San Francisco-based hotshot won over the only other candidate for the top PSA Award, World Boxing Council (WBC) flyweight champion Malcolm Tuñacao.

Delasin told the INQUIRER by phone that she'll be arriving on Jan. 17 to personally accept the award during the annual PSA Awards the following day at the Holiday Inn Pavilion.

President Joseph Estrada has been invited as guest of honor.

"It's a big honor for me and I'm really proud of this award just like the big awards I've won thus far," Delasin said.

Delasin is set to fly to Orlando, Florida, tomorrow, Jan. 7, to receive the Louise Suggs Trophy for being the LPGA Tour's top rookie during the annual awards dinner of the LPGA.

Karrie Webb of Australia is the main awardee as the Player of the Year of 2000.

She will play at the kickoff leg of the LPGA, the JC Penney Afterschool Open, slated Jan. 12-14 and will leave for Manila on Jan. 15.

Delasin will stay in Manila for three days and will be missing the Subaru Memorial Classic set Jan. 18-21. It was in the same tournament where she launched her LPGA career last year, placing 36th.

In her sensational rookie year, the Texas-born Delasin won the Giant Eagle Classic in Ohio and finished the season $339,112 richer. She wound up 25th in the money list.

Using part of her winnings, Delasin was able to buy a two-story, five-bedroom dream house with a three-car garage worth $700,000 in upscale South San Francisco. She now drives around with a brand new Lexus aside from buying her family a Previa van.

Before she turned pro straight from high school, she won the US Women's Amateur crown and spearheaded the country's bid in four international meets—the Southeast Asian Games, the Bangkok Asian Games and both the Manila World Amateurs in 1996 and the 1998 World Amateurs in Santiago, Chile.

Team PHILIPPINES

DELASIN: Milestone feat.

Southwoods tilt to put RP in world map

THE DAVIDOFF Asian Golf Tour will not only put the Philippines in the sporting map with the holding of the President's Invitational Cup to kick off the rich golf circuit on Jan. 25.

It is also expected to give local golf the much-needed boost to revive the sport that has given the country international honors in the past.

The $200,000-event will showcase the Philippines' best golfers against a tested international field, many of whom are just a degree shy of breaking into the US or European Golf Tours.

The pros will be paired with some of the country's top amateurs as well as a host of corporate bigwigs whose support is being wooed by organizers to provide moral and financial assistance to the development of the game here.

"This is no ordinary golf tournament," said Bob Sobrepena, chair of tournament host Manila Southwoods. "Besides providing local golf enthusiasts an opportunity to see some of the rising stars of golf, the event hopes to inspire our young golfers to see their future as top players of the game."

It is for this reason, according to Sobrepena, that the Invitational Cup will be annual affair starting this year and hopefully for the next 20 years or so.

"That's how much we are investing in this event," said the Southwoods chair who plans to also host the Casino Filipino Open sometime in March as a fitting follow up to this international tournament.

What makes the Invitational Cup doubly exciting is the format.

In consultation with the organizing Asian PGA Tour, the Invitational Cup's pro-am format brings a new dimension to the Asian Tour which in its five years of existence never had a tournament of this nature.

But the organizers are the first to admit that it is not unique. The event is patterned with the hugely popular and successful Pebble Beach pro-am in the US PGA Tour which annually attracts some of the leading corporate giants of America as well as celebrity golfers such as sports and movie stars.

"We will work toward this end," said Sobrepena who wants to make the Invitational Cup the traditional kickoff leg of the Davidoff Tour for years to come.

Batang Pinoy set Jan. 21-28

THE 2ND Philippine Youth Games-Batang Pinoy will be staged at the San Luis Recreational, Educational, Cultural and Sports (RECS) Village in Sta. Cruz, Laguna on Jan. 21-28.

The event is spearheaded by Philippine Sports Commission Chair Carlos D. Tuason and new PSC Commissioner William I. Ramirez and hosted by Laguna Gov. Joey Lina.

Ramirez, the first sports commissioner from Mindanao, is in charge of program.

According to Tuason, the PYG-Batang Pinoy aims to continue the sporting spirit among athletes-students, particularly those 12 years old and below. "It will also showcase the stakeholders' strong desire to have a sustainable program for children at an early stage, pursuing sports excellence, discipline and values inherent in the practice of sports and physical education," Tuason added.

DILG (Department of Local Government) and DECS (Department of Education, Culture and Sports) are also supporting the PSC-initiated sportsfest.

Around 3,000 athletes from different local government units all over the country are expected to compete in 18 individual and team events, namely, arnis, tennis, swimming, table tennis, taekwondo, football, little league baseball and softball, volleyball and basketball.

According to Ramirez, 17 regions will be represented—I, II, III, IV, V, VI, VII, VIII, IX, X, XI, XII, XIII, Cordillera Autonomous Region, National Capital Region, CARAGA and ARMM.

Guest speakers during the opening ceremony at 1 p.m. on Jan. 18 are Philippine Olympic Committee President Celso L. Dayrit and PSC Chair Tuason.

The closing ceremony on Jan. 28 will feature the country's sports heroes and outstanding athletes led by Atlanta Olympic Games silver medalist Mansueto "Onyok" Velasco, Asian track stars Lydia de Vega and Elma Muros and swimmer Eric Buhain.

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MONTHLY DRAW PRIZES IN 9 AREAS*	DRAW DATE	DEADLINE OF ENTRIES
First Prize : P50,000	Feb. 21, 2001	Feb. 14, 2001
Second Prize : 20,000	Mar. 21, 2001	Mar. 14, 2001
Third Prize : 10,000		

*GMA, North Luzon, Central Luzon, South Luzon1, South Luzon2, East Visayas, West Visayas, North Mindanao and South Mindanao

GRAND DRAW PRIZES IN 4 AREAS*	DRAW DATE	DEADLINE OF ENTRIES
First Prize : P500,000 Second Prize : 200,000 Third Prize : 50,000 15 Consolation Prizes of P10,000 each : 150,000	April 27, 2001	April 20, 2001

*Luzon, Visayas, Mindanao and GMA.
PROMO STARTS JAN. 1, 2001 AND ENDS APRIL 27, 2001. DOH BFAD Permit No. 0494 s. 2000

METRO

LOUIE C. CAMINO, Editor

- 'We have no part in Abbas kidnap'—police A19
- 40,000 in Navotas might lose vote A20
- 'Eavesdropping' case against GMA-7 closed A21
- Amok stabs five A21

Residents seize trash trucks going to 'closed' landfill

By Volt Contreras and Blanche S. Rivera

GARBAGE trucks from Metro Manila continue to dump their load at the San Mateo Landfill site in the dead of night, a Rizal provincial official confirmed on Thursday.

Ed Torres, legal counsel of the Rizal provincial government, cited reports that garbage trucks were seen dumping their load at the supposedly closed dumpsite around midnight or early morning.

Torres said Rizal residents even caught two dumptrucks cruising along Marcos Highway about 11 p.m. Tuesday which they reported to police.

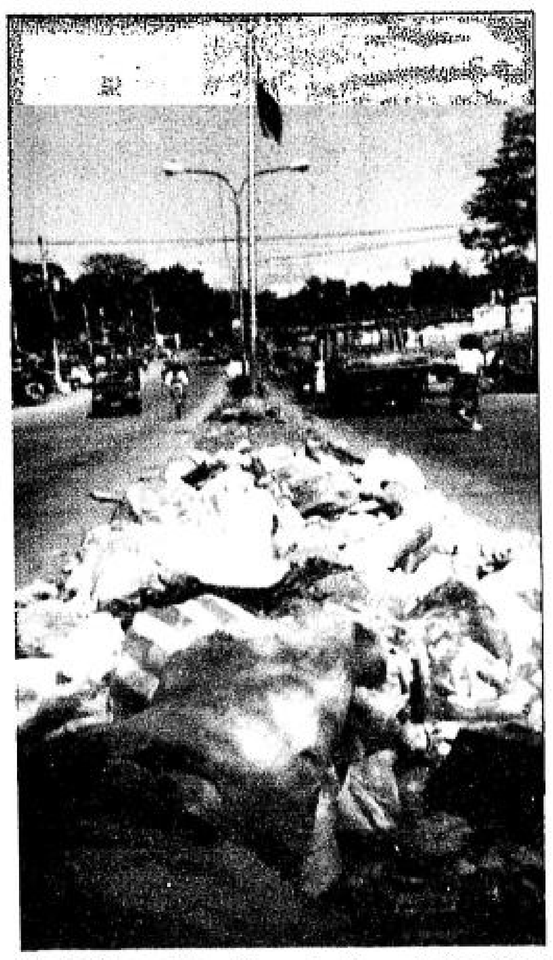
The two dumptrucks, which Torres could not yet identify with any contractor, were impounded and the licenses of drivers confiscated by the Antipolo police.

But residents were not appeased. They feared that some dumptrucks might be secretly unloading garbage in more obscure Rizal towns around San Mateo and Antipolo, said Eleazar Kasilag, spokesperson of A-Homes which represented 210 subdivision homeowners associations in Rizal.

Residents also reported that five dumptrucks were seen heading for San Mateo via Masinag almost every day since the landfill was closed permanently on Dec. 31, Kasilag said.

"The landfill is closed, but they (gar-

RESIDENTS/ A19



TRASH starts to pile up in the middle of the road in Batasan Hills in Quezon City.

EDWIN BACASMAS

Payatas explosion kills two

TWO people were killed yesterday in a grenade attack in Quezon City but the incident was not believed to be linked to last week's series of deadly bomb blasts, radio reports and police said.

The reports said the blast occurred near the Payatas dumpsite. The reports gave little details of the explosion.

"We have been informed of a grenade blast but we are still investigating," a police spokesman for suburban Quezon City told Agence France Presse.

Police said they did not believe the latest blast was linked to the series of bomb explosions in Manila on Dec. 30. *AFP*

17 ordinary people living ordinary lives

By Agnes E. Donato

BEFORE their arrest on Thursday, the 17 Muslim men from Barangay Culiat in Quezon City did not know each other, except for one or two who were related.

They may be living under the same roof, but they went about their business separately and were merely nameless faces to each other.

They say their only concern is to earn money to bring home to their families.

17 ORDINARY/ A18

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Military's most corrupt unit

ON TARGET

Ramon Tulfo

SOLDIERS win a war because they not only have the fighting spirit, but also because they are well supplied with equipment and food.

Actually, a soldier's fighting spirit is as good as his provisions—weapons, ammunition, food and other things such as shoes, headgear, raincoat, tents, bedding and food utensils like spoon and fork. An army that is not well provided for loses its will to fight and thus, loses the war.

The most important unit in an army is the one that supplies troops with their combat equipment.

***

In the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP), the unit that supplies soldiers in the field with their combat needs is called the Logistics Command (Logcom).

It is the most corrupt unit in the AFP. Officers and enlisted personnel, as well as civilian employees at Logcom—with few exceptions—are corrupt. It is the military's counterpart of the Bureau of Customs in graft and corruption.

At Logcom, officers in charge of procuring equipment for use in combat make millions of pesos on people's money.

***

Logcom is so graft-ridden, it's common to see key officers wearing Rolex watches or going to the office in Mercedes Benzes, Ford Expeditions or Pajeros.

After office hours, these officers are habitues of expensive nightclubs like La Legenda and Pegasus where they spend tens of thousands of pesos on drinks and tips for GROs.

Where do these guys get the money when they were not millionaires before they were assigned at Logcom?

***

My spy says the corrupt officers get the money from the "SOP" (read:bribes) given by suppliers from whom the equipment are bought. They also earn cuts from the price of the equipment.

For example: A civilian supplier contracted by Logcom to provide uniforms at say, P900 per set, would only come up with the real value of the uniforms at P650 per set. The supplier gives the P250 to Logcom officers, enlisted personnel and civilian employees.

The result: The uniforms are substandard and easily get torn because the materials used in making them are of low quality. Why? Because the supplier has to get back what he has given in bribes and "commissions" to Logcom people. The supplier has to earn a profit, too.

"Mr. Tulfo, we have to bribe even the lowly clerks so our papers get processed fast when we demand payment for our supplies," a supplier told me.

***

From now on, Sen. Miriam Defensor-Santiago should be addressed as "Your Highness" because she thinks she's royalty.

Princess Miriam went ballistic when three spectators stared at her while she was questioning a witness at the impeachment trial last Thursday.

Her Highness demanded that the three spectators, who did nothing but just looked at her, be expelled from the gallery and cited for contempt for going "out of their way to stand out of their seats…just to look at me in a provocative way."

***Susmaryosep*! Why are you like that, *Inday*?**

Those people didn't heckle you, didn't make any snide remarks, they just looked at you—and you got mad?

Something must be wrong with you, Ma'am!

Young man stabbed dead in frat war

A YOUNG man was stabbed dead after a rumble erupted between two rival gangs in Caloocan City on Thursday night.

Michael de la Cruz, 17, of Vanguard Street, Barangay 178, Area D, Camarin, was stabbed three times in the chest during a free-for-all at about 11 p.m. Thursday in Bagong Silang, said PO3 Elvis Imperial.

De la Cruz died on the way to the Dr. Jose Rodriguez Memorial Hospital, according to Dr. Ellen Grace Dulay.

De la Cruz was on board a jeepney bound for Novaliches, Quezon City when he met Melvin Correl, a member of a rival group, Caloocan police said.

De la Cruz and Correl then had a heated argument, police said.

Hours later, the two chanced upon each other in Bagong Silang. They were joined by their respective gangs and a rumble ensued.

Correl and his group fled after one of them stabbed De la Cruz dead.

Christian V. Esguerra

GMA: Keep our name clean

VICE President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo on Tuesday said she advised her 31-year-old son Juan Miguel to keep the Macapagal name clean now that he's entering politics.

The younger Arroyo, more popularly known as Mikey, earlier said he was planning to run for vice governor of Pampanga, his mother's hometown, in the May elections.

He will be the running mate of Pampanga Gov. Lito Lapid, who is seeking reelection. Both will run under the Lakas-NUCD-UMDP party, which happens to be the party of Macapagal.

Christine Avendaño

MAID IN TONDO FIRE

'I only wanted to burn the house, not kill them'

By Jerome Aning

FACING the death penalty if she would be found guilty of burning down a Tondo, Manila house, which resulted in the death of six people, including two children, repentant housemaid Edna Maingan said she was sorry for doing the deed.

"I am really, really sorry. I did not want them to die. I only wanted the house to burn down so that I may be avenged, even a little, of the wickedness I suffered from them," Maingan said on Thursday after inquest prosecutor Jovencio Senados charged her with consummated arson and ordered her jailed without bail.

She also said she could still hear the agonized voices of the family that died in the blaze she caused, and claimed their screams would haunt her dreams every night.

Maingan is suspected of burning down the house of her employer, engineer-contractor Roberto Separa, 45; his wife Virginin, 45; and their children Michael, 24; Daphne, 18; Priscilla, 14; and Roberto Jr., 11 at 174 Moderna Street in Balut, Tondo at dawn on Tuesday.

In an interview at the detention cell of the Manila Fire Department's arson division in Sta. Cruz, Maingan again blamed his dead employers for not paying her salary for 17 months.

She said the couple hired her in 1998 with a P1,700 salary. But on August 1999, the couple had financial difficulties and stopped paying her salary, Maingan said.

"I had nowhere to go and I did not know anybody here in Manila," Maingan said. "So I stayed with them and waited, hoping that they will finally pay me.

"It was okay with me if they didn't want me to go home as long as they pay me," she said. "But all I got were promises and I was burdened with work."

Sometime after Christmas, Maingan said she approached Mrs. Separa and again repeated her desire to get some money so she could go home. She said Mrs. Separa asked her again to postpone her trip because classes would soon resume and no one would attend to her children.

Maingan said she insisted but the woman only laughed at her and even insulted her.

"She told me I could ride home using my broomstick and if it won't work, then I can swim home," Maingan said.

She said she was homesick and had long wanted to go back to her native Dadiangas in General Santos City and see her six siblings and ailing mother.

Chief Insp. Fennimore Jaudian, arson division chief, said barangay *tanods* apprehended Maingan who tried to escape. Witnesses told fire investigators they saw Maingan go out of the house and only gazed at it as it burned.

When she was searched, Maingan was found with a new lighter. She also had a travelling bag filled with her clothes.

Jaudian said Maingan lit a bunch of newspapers and threw them at the kitchen. The flames quickly spread as the house was only made of wood and light materials.

The liquefied petroleum gas tank then exploded and flames engulfed the entire house, incinerating the Separa family who were already screaming for help in their bedrooms on the second floor, police said.

FINGERPRINTS are taken from suspected housemaid Edna Maingan at the Western Police District. ERIK ARAZAS

17 ordinary people living . . .

(From page A17)

One of the men is Allan Akmad, 34, who, according to his nephew Norodin Alon, 21, is a homebody. Alon said Akmad only left their home to go to the mosque to pray or to report for work as a security guard in a fast-food chain.

"His wife is giving birth to their first child in February and he is very excited about this," said Alon. "That's why he always comes home straight from work."

As a security guard, Akmad knows the basic things about guns, Alon said, but he is never allowed to bring his service firearm home.

Miranda Unutan, 26, Alon's other uncle, who was also among the 17 men arrested, is a religious man, according to his nephew.

He is also a proud father of an 8-month-old boy named after the prophet Mohammed, Alon said.

Unutan is also a security guard in a hospital in Cubao. Like Akmad, he comes home straight from work eager for his son, Alon said.

Unutan and his family used to live at the Muslim center in Quiapo, Manila, Alon said. But they moved to the house in Culiat where the rent is cheaper at only P500 a month.

The man who was said to have been caught with illegal firearms, Mohammad Balambag, 28, rarely watches news programs, said his sister Norma Balambag.

She said Balambag, a laborer at a construction site in Makati, is usually home from work at 6 p.m. to take care of his 8-month-old son.

"My brother is a good man," Norma claimed. "He may be a mere elementary graduate, but he works hard to feed his family in a dignified way."

Peaceful

Teng Arab, brother of Danny Kusain, 23, who was arrested along with four of his cousins, said his relatives are ordinary people who are living ordinary lives.

"They are peaceful people who find happiness in just being with their family," Arab said.

Arab said that after the arrest, Kusain, 23, might lose his job in a plastic factory where he is working. Kusain took a vacation leave about a week ago to look after his children, as his wife is temporarily helping his sister in a garage sale.

"He is supposed to report for work today (Thursday)," Arab said. "After this incident, I doubt if his employer will still allow him to work. The discrimination in the workplace against Muslims is bad enough, but his arrest will surely make it worse."

Although he would arrive home tired from his janitor's job in a hospital in Cubao, Efren Mamintal, 26, was always ready to help his wife with the house chores, Arab said.

Arab described his other cousin, Sammy Unsi, 23, as "a joker," who works as a janitor in a shopping mall in Ortigas Center.

"We can always count on him to say something funny, however difficult the situation we are in," he said.

Long conversations

Romano Salik, 27, and Arnold Montong, 28, who were also arrested in the house the military raided, do not even live in the house, Arab said.

"They just slept over here," Arab said. "We are a family whose conversations sometimes last until the wee hours of the morning."

Salik and Montong, he said, also work as janitors in two different hospitals.

Rahib Lumalug, 30, was about to leave for Saudi Arabia, where he has been working for several years now. His departure was delayed after he was found to have a problem with his eyesight during his medical examination, said his cousin-in-law Lyn Dalana.

Cousins Alvin Kinal, 24, and Legaspi Nanimbong, 23, left their families in Cotabato to seek opportunities here, according to their cousin Monicks Kinal. They worked as construction workers and have been looking for overseas jobs, said Monicks Kinal.

"We have already talked to some agents who will help us get employment abroad," he said. "But we have to work until we raise the money for the placement fee."

Looking for jobs

Reala Mohamad, 27, also used to work abroad, but he missed his family so much that he returned home, said his mother-in-law Lupia Angkatan.

Mohamad came home last year and has since been recruiting other Muslims who have lost hope of finding their place in the country for jobs abroad.

Angkatan said her other son-in-law, Frederick Punzalan, 23, had just arrived last November leaving his family in Cotabato.

"He was hoping to bring his family to Metro Manila when he gets a stable job here," she added.

Only Angkatan's brother-in-law, Akas Edsel, 30, might have a reason, although it is farfetched, to go against the government.

Edsel used to work building houses in Erap City, a housing project of the Estrada administration, Angkatan said. She said he resigned after his salary was delayed.

About P3,000 that John Menor, 29, was keeping in his wallet was said to have been taken during the raid.

Menor was saving the money to renew his security guard license, which had expired, according to his wife Sauddia. Some of the money was also for expenses at home, she said.

"Now he's in jail, and we don't know where else to find other resources," she lamented.

Anguish, confusion

The youngest among the men arrested was Japoy Abdullah, 18, Menor's cousin. Sauddia said he arrived in Metro Manila only a week ago.

"Japoy is completely illiterate and could not speak Tagalog," she said. "He has never gone anywhere outside Culiat since he got here. He was afraid he might get lost."

In the midst of the anguish and confusion, the only Christian living in the houses that were raided vouched for the innocence of her Muslim neighbors.

Norma Paragatos, 51, is a sister-in-law of the tenement's owner and has been living with the Muslims for three years now.

She occupies one of the 10 units in the 2-story apartment, directly across the room where the family of Mohammad Balambag lives.

"I pity them so much," she said. "These are innocent people minding their own business. In the years we have all lived here, they have always treated my son and myself as if we were one of them despite our differences."

The Inquirer failed to find any relatives of Japoy Abdullah, 18, and John Menor, 29, two other men arrested during the raid. But like their neighbors, Abdulla and Menor have their tales to tell. And like them, their stories would no longer be filled with hope.

ALABANG Jaycees INC

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A special dinner with JCI World President, Mr. Georges Bouverat, at the Alabang Jaycees Grand Induction Ball on Friday, January 12, 2001 at 7 o'clock in the evening at the Manila Orchidarium, M.V. Orosa St. corner Finance Drive, Rizal Park, Manila (beside the Museum of the Filipino People).

Programme

5:30 - 6:30 PM	Registration
6:30 - 8:00 PM	Dinner-show and Festivities
8:00 - 9:00 PM	Alabang Jaycees 2001 Induction Ceremonies.
9:00 - 9:30 PM	Presentation of Gifts to JCIWP Georges Bouverat by th LOM Presidents
9:30PM	An Unforgettable Fellowship Night featuring special guest performers
Attire	Formal/ Barong Tagalog

Tickets are available at the JCP office and at the venue on the event date.
For reservations, please call the Alabang Jaycees Secretariat at tel. 840-69-12
or call Rowena at 823-03-69

Drug suspect snatches baby

By Jerome Aning

MANILA police are looking for an alleged drug user for reportedly abducting a six-month-old girl in Tondo on Thursday.

The girl's mother Edeliza Paco, 21, went to the Western Police District's general assignments section yesterday afternoon to report that her former live-in partner, Roberto Salamat, kidnapped her baby Nicole from their house at Beltran Street, Tondo.

Edeliza said Salamat believed that Nicole was his daughter by his former live-in partner.

Edeliza, who works at a Makati nightclub, said she left the girl with her mother Eliza, 42, on Thursday night. Eliza, who lives with her daughter, was tending to a chore when the suspect sneaked inside the house and took Nicole from the crib.

Edeliza told investigator PO3 Severino Busa that she separated with the suspect last year because he was hooked on illegal drugs and began to beat her up frequently.

Salamat, who lives at Alido Heights, Malolos, Bulacan, thought Nicole was his daughter but Edeliza said the baby's real father was one Nestor Mercado, whom she met before Salamat.

She said she also bore Mercado a son, Prince Carl, 3. Edeliza said she also separated from Mercado when he became overly jealous. She was pregnant with Nicole at the time.

Salamat, however, refused to believe that Nicole was not his, maintaining that he had custody rights over the girl.

"He was head-strong and was quite convinced that I was deceiving him," Edeliza told reporters.

After Nicole's abduction, Edeliza said several of her relatives went to Salamat's house in Malolos, Bulacan but failed to find her there.

Salamat's relatives allegedly shielded the suspect, telling Edeliza's relatives that they would have "to go through a needle's eye" to get Nicole back.

Edeliza promptly filed a kidnap complaint before the police.

Investigators have contacted other police units in Metro Manila and Bulacan to help them locate Salamat and Nicole.

'Make firms pay for cleanup'

AMID the garbage problem plaguing the metropolis, a Manila councilor has proposed that construction firms be made to pay for the cleaning up of their trash.

Councilor Bernardito Ang of the city's third district noted that construction and engineering companies engaged in building, demolition and repair produce piles of debris and other solid wastes which are left to the city government to dispose.

Ang's proposal seeks to require construction firms which have construction sites of more than 100 square meters to pay the city government for the collection of their wastes.

Ang said it is not enough for contractors and builders to pay license fees.

He said that since construction firms are considered regular business establishments, it is only proper for the city hall to impose fees in exchange for the government's cleaning up of their mess.

The bill provides that for all construction, repair or demolition works covering less than 200 meters, a garbage collection fee of P1,000 will be imposed; P1,500 for work areas between 200 and 500 square metes; P2,500 for 500 to 800 square meters; and P5,000 for 8,000 to 1,000 square meters.

An additional P500 will be assessed for every 100 square meters or a fraction thereof in excess of 1,000 square meters.

The garbage fees will be assessed by the office of the city engineer, specifically the building permit section, and must be paid to the city treasurer before the actual work begins.

Violators of the ordinance will be punished with imprisonment of not more than two months, a fine not exceeding P1,000, or both.

Brother's killer hunted

MANILA police are hunting down a 50-year-old man for allegedly shooting dead his younger brother and his live-in partner over an old family feud in Tondo late Monday night.

The victims were identified as Conrado Burgos, 39, of Bato Street Extension, and his live-in partner Marissa Ignacio, 38. Both died on the spot.

Burgos suffered a gunshot wound on the body. Ignacio was hit on the head.

SPO3 Ismael de la Cruz of the city police homicide section said the shooting took place around 10:30 p.m. while Burgos and Ignacio were on their way home from a nearby *sari-sari* store on Bato Street.

De la Cruz said the suspect, Romeo Burgos, and his brother Conrado had an old grudge regarding family matters and had not been in speaking terms.

Romeo reportedly hid in an alley and sprang upon the surprised couple, shooting them with a .38-caliber revolver. The couple's bodies were brought to the Sanctuary Funeral Home.

Romeo faces charges of double murder.

Jerome Aning

'We have no part in Abbas kidnap'

By Blanche S. Rivera

"WE have nothing to do with that. We're even helping them."

An indignant Supt. John Sosito, Pasig City Police Chief, issued this denial to clear his men of participation in the alleged abduction on Wednesday of Ismael Abbas, cousin of Moro National Liberation Front lawyer Macaponton Abbas and Bangsa Moro party leader Firdausi Abbas.

Men identifying themselves as policemen were said to have kidnapped Abbas, 39, an FX driver and operator, in front of his house on Banag Street in Barangay Pineda, Pasig City at about 9:30 a.m. on Wednesday.

According to Abbas' wife Anda, the men had forced her husband into an unmarked cream Mitsubishi L-300 van.

But Sosito stressed the team from the Pasig Police's Criminal Investigation Division came to Abbas' house only after Abbas' sister-in-law Alinden, sought their help about 2:30 p.m. Wednesday.

The team, led by Insp. Antonio Paulete, managed to interview the family members and some witnesses who claimed they heard the alleged abductors say they were policemen, which prevented them from intervening.

"We have no involvement in the abduction," Sosito said repeatedly in a telephone interview on Thursday.

He said police only went to Abbas' house after the kidnapping had been reported. He claimed the family even cooperated with police.

Sosito said Pasig police are treating Abbas' disappearance as a missing person case. He said police are in the process of interviewing the witnesses who could provide them with a description of the suspects.

Police are preparing a sketch of the six men, who allegedly abducted Abbas. Neighbors who witnessed the incident and who tried to prevent the men from taking Abbas said the men warned them about meddling and told them they were policemen.

Sosito also dismissed speculations that Abbas could have been taken in connection with the search for the perpetrators of the series of bombings that rocked Metro Manila on Rizal Day, killing at least 18 people and hurting about 90 others.

"It's hard to implicate anyone," Sosito said and added that it was "not good to make linkages to the bombings."

"We're treating Abbas as a separate case."

The Abbas family has not reported any ransom demands or threatening calls in connection with the disappearance of Abbas, police said.

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Saturday, January 6, 2001
Week Before Epiphany

1st Reading: *1 Jn 5:5-13*
Gospel: *Mk 1:7-11*

John preached to the people saying, "After me comes one who is more powerful than I am; I have baptized you with water, but he will baptize you in the Holy Spirit. As for me, I am not worthy to bend down and untie his sandals."

At that time Jesus came from Nazareth, a town of Galilee, and was baptized by John in the Jordan. And the moment he came up out of the water, heaven opened before him and he saw the Spirit coming down on him like a dove. And these words were heard from heaven, "You are my Son, the Beloved, the One I have chosen."

Commentary:

We are on the eve of the feast of the Epiphany. God does not disappoint. But he surprises us because he gives us gifts that are not exactly what we expect but are greater than our expectations. For example, Isaiah foretold as a sign that a young maiden would bear a child whose name would be called Emmanuel (God-with-us). When the fulfillment of the promise came, it was a virgin who brought forth a child who was literally God with us because he was divine as well as human. Prepare for the Lord's manifestations, but prepare also to be surprised by him.

Claretian Publications Inc., 8 Mayumi St., U.P. Village, Diliman, Quezon City, U.P. P.O. Box 4, Diliman, 1101 Quezon City; Tel.: 921-3984; Fax: 921-7429; E-mail: claret@cnl.net; Website: http://www.cnl.net/claret

SUPREME COURT DOCTRINES

CRIMINAL LAW (AGGRAVATING CIRCUMSTANCES)—Conspiracy—There is conspiracy when two (2) or more persons come to an agreement concerning the commission of a felony and decide to commit it. The same degree of proof necessary to prove the crime is required to support a finding of criminal conspiracy. Direct proof, however, is not essential to show conspiracy. It need not be shown that the parties actually came together and agreed in express terms to enter into and pursue a common design. Proof of concerted action before, during and after the crime, which demonstrates their unity of design and objective is sufficient. Thus, to hold an accused liable as co-principal by reason of conspiracy, he must be shown to have performed an overt act in pursuance of or furtherance of the conspiracy, although the acts performed might have been distinct and separate. This overt act may consist of active participation in the actual commission of the crime itself or it may consist of moral assistance to his co-conspirators by being present at the time of the commission of the crime, or by exerting a moral ascendance over the other co-conspirators by moving them to execute or implement the criminal plan. Once conspiracy is established, all the conspirators are answerable as co-principals regardless of their degree of participation, for in the contemplation of the law, the act of one becomes the act of all. [Citations omitted.] [Justice Quisumbing, Second Division, People v. Ponce, G.R. No. 126254, September 29, 2000]

Digest by R.B. Vera

Residents seize trash trucks going to 'closed' landfill

(From page A17)

bage contractors) could be dumping in the vicinity of the landfill. This will only aggravate the situation that we tried to eliminate with the closure of the landfill," Kasilag said.

In a phone interview on Thursday, Kasilag said the confiscation of drivers' licenses would not work because the dumptruck drivers have secured two or three fake licenses to beat the sanctions.

"And who would want to keep the dumptrucks? They would be impounded, but not for too long because they stink," Kasilag said.

In Metro Manila, officials "could hardly eat or sleep" trying to find an alternative dumpsite for the garbage that has been piling up on city streets.

Ironically, a congressman, who co-authored the House impeachment complaint against President Estrada, appealed to the Chief Executive on Thursday to personally handle the garbage problem which is now posing serious threats to public health.

Quezon City Rep. Michael Defensor said if the President decided to "dig into the garbage problem, he may wind up smelling like roses afterwards and possibly recoup part of the popularity he lost from the jueteng scandal."

Defensor did not offer the President anything specific, but he said Mr. Estrada "cannot pin the blame on local executives. The buck stops with him."

"It will be the height of callousness or isolation if the President has not smelled the city's stink or seen the ghastly sight of Metro Manila's uncollected trash," Defensor said.

In Pasig City, Vice Mayor Lorna Angeles-Bernardo said garbage has not fouled up the city yet because private contractors have taken charge of the problem and have found a temporary dumping ground in Barangay Pinagbuhatan, also in the city.

"We're also eyeing another site outside the city, because there's really nowhere else to dump here for long, but talks are under way," Bernardo said.

She did not say where the new dumpsite is located.

In Mandaluyong, the trash is piling up at a temporary dumpsite in Barangay Vergara while dumptrucks have been unable to pick up garbage around the city because they are still packed with trash collected previously.

In Manila, Mayor Lito Atienza warned residents on Thursday not to dump garbage on streets and sidewalks or they will be slapped with stiff sanctions, including imprisonment.

Under existing laws, those caught illegally dumping garbage would be fined P200 and up to six months imprisonment.

"The closure of the San Mateo dumpsite has caused a garbage crisis in Metro Manila and we in the city government are currently seeking an acceptable solution. In the meantime, we are asking residents in Manila to extend their full support and cooperation, primarily by not illegally and indiscriminately dumping their garbage," Atienza said.

The mayor also announced that the city government has a transfer station north of Manila where daily collections of garbage are temporarily stored.

He pointed out that the city government, along with other local government units in the metropolis, is working closely with the Metro Manila Development Authority to find a lasting solution to the garbage problem.

"I am asking everyone not to aggravate the crisis by illegally dumping your garbage. Our garbage trucks will continue to collect garbage on a regular basis," Atienza said.

He explained that the current garbage crisis caused by the closure of the San Mateo dumpsite has been exacerbated by the issuance of a temporary restraining order suspending the opening of the landfill on Semirara Island in Antique.

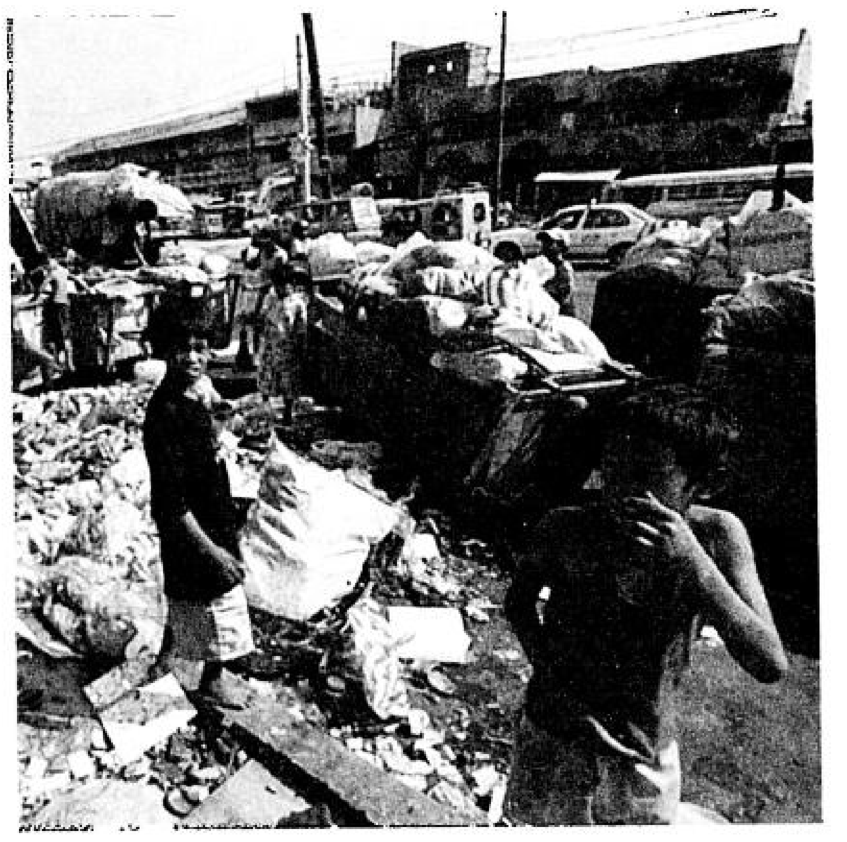
Atienza said MMDA officials are working round-the-clock to have the TRO lifted.

"Once in a while, we need some good spanking so we can absorb the lesson," Kasilag said, referring to the furor in Metro Manila over the garbage crisis.

All towns in Rizal have their own controlled open dumpsite and are not experiencing the problems hounding the cities and municipalities of Metro Manila.

Torres said Rizal Gov. Casimiro Ynares has ordered all Rizal mayors to present a proposal for the operation of their respective dumpsites, which may soon be closed too on orders of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources.

"But the San Mateo landfill is no longer an option. It is absolutely, definitely closed," he said.



A YOUNG scavenger takes advantage of the growing sea of garbage along C-5 Road (above), while trash collectors have their hands full cleaning up R-10 in Manila.

ERIK ARAZAS

40,000 in Navotas might lose vote

By CHRISTIAN V. ESGUERRA

AN UNPREPARED, ill-equipped Commission on Elections (Comelec) could cost the vote for about 40,000 Navotas residents, who might not be able to exercise their right of suffrage in this May's local elections unless the registration is extended.

Malabon-Navotas Rep. Federico Sandoval II said on Thursday the Comelec failed to properly disseminate information so at least 30 percent of the 120,000 residents of Navotas failed to meet the registration deadline on Dec. 30.

"I have received complaints that even this early in the electoral process, during the registration, there has already been widespread disenfranchising of legitimate Navotas voters," Sandoval said in a statement.

He said the number of registrars sent by the Comelec was disproportionate to the 120,000 eligible voters in the municipality. There were 18 registrars, each handling 300 voters a day.

"We definitely need beyond Dec. 30 to register our voters," said Sandoval, also known as a member of Congress' Spice Boys.

He said the Comelec was also late in distributing enumeration lists and precinct maps, which contributed in the municipalities' registration woes.

An enumeration list is the result of the house-to-house survey conducted by the Comelec early last year. A precinct map identifies where people should vote.

Fishermen, who have no valid identification cards, also found it hard to register since the Comelec allegedly failed to issue guidelines on how they could be included in the voters' list despite their lack of proper identification.

FREE RIDE
This young man knows how to get around fast in the streets of Metro Manila. Many motorists become unwitting hosts to people like this.
EDWIN BACASMAS

What to do when your car is towed

ON ORDERS of Mayor Lito Atienza, Manila Traffic and Parking Bureau head Manuel M. Zarcal released the list of roads classified as no parking zones as well as guidelines on the towing of stalled and illegally parked vehicles.

The following streets and their corresponding intersections are classified as no parking and tow-away zones: Roxas Boulevard, Taft Avenue, South Superhighway, Rizal Avenue, Juan Luna, Jose Abad Santos, Quezon Boulevard, Governor Forbes, Pres. Quirino Avenue, Road 10, España, Ramon Magsaysay, Claro M. Recto and United Nations Avenue.

Also declared as no parking and tow-away zones are: Pablo Ocampo Street, Quirino Avenue, San Andres, Remedios, Pedro Gil, Padre Faura, Estrada, Mabini, M.H. Del Pilar, T.M. Kalaw, Tayuman, Blumentritt, Aurora Boulevard, San Marcelino, Arlegui, Del Pan, Laong-Laan, Dapitan (Estrada to P. Ocampo), P. Noval, V. Mapa, Legarda, J.P. Laurel, A. Villegas, N. Almeda Lopez and Concepcion Street.

Towing operations are prohibited on all secondary roads not listed above, unless requested by the barangay chair or station commander who has jurisdiction over the area on a case-to-case basis such as stalled vehicles, vehicular accident or where special operations are being conducted.

Under the guidelines, if the driver appears while the vehicle is being towed or shortly after the vehicle has been lifted for towing, the towing crew shall release the vehicle to the driver upon issuance of a release or waiver form and/or a citation ticket for the traffic violation.

Hagar Towing Inc., the city-accredited towing firm, shall only conduct towing operations in the presence of authorized city representatives.

To redeem impounded vehicles, drivers will have to: 1) proceed to the impounding area written on the notice sheet (Mehan Garden or any area to be designated later), 2) request towing ticket from officer-in-charge and present proof of ownership of impounded vehicle (photocopy of Certificate of Registration would suffice), 3) pay the fine and towing fee and secure an official receipt and clearance slip, and, 4) present the official receipt and clearance slip to the guard on duty for release of impounded vehicle.

Please spare campuses, security group appeals

By BLANCHE S. RIVERA

SPARE the schools, please.

The Philippine National Association of Schools Security Organizations (Philnasso) on Tuesday made the appeal as students trooped back to schools after the long Christmas vacation as bomb threats continue to hound the metropolis.

Col. Jose Dino, chair of the Philnasso board, said campuses in Metro Manila were "very open" targets for terrorist groups responsible for the Dec. 30 bombings and were vulnerable spots for similar attacks.

At least 18 people were killed and 90 others were injured in the Rizal Day bombings.

"We don't know if they're going to blow up the schools, too, but there's a bomb scare right now," Dino said in a phone interview. "We appeal to whoever is behind the bombings to please spare the schools from whatever ill motive there is in the bombings."

He said Chief Supt. Avelino Razon, director of the Western Police District, and Director Edgar Aglipay, chief of the Metro Manila Police Office, vowed to secure the campuses by deploying mobile patrols in the vicinity of schools, especially in Manila where the biggest explosions happened.

He admitted that increased police visibility, particularly in the University Belt, should preempt the security concerns of the Manila-based schools, which have the largest student populations in Metro Manila.

The Philnasso head admitted that only about 15 percent of the school guards were trained to detect explosives while most of them "search and inspect belongings but don't really know what they're looking for."

He said the Philnasso requested Aglipay for a conference of the schools security heads so the guards could have basic instructions in detecting and handling explosives.

"We're not afraid, but we're concerned," Dino said. "These seem to be well-financed bombings…The guards are not well-equipped, and they lack training."

He said barangay officials were also tapped to keep an eye on the surroundings of schools for suspicious-looking characters.

He said private schools, such as "the De La Salle University, which has been continuously anti-Erap," should also be alert as terrorist groups could be targeting them.

"If this had been the work of radical people (like the leftists and rightists), I don't think they would target schools," Dino said. "But if others (are responsible for the bombings), then the schools are open to this kind of terrorism."

Security officials earlier blamed the attacks on the Communist Party of the Philippines and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front, but an anti-crime group claimed it would present a witness who linked the military to the bombings.

Suspected terrorists barred at Naia

IMMIGRATION authorities on Monday afternoon barred two young men from the Middle East from entering Manila on suspicion that they were terrorists.

Kurt Halil and Kurt Mecmettin, both 22, were sent on a flight back to Bahrain, their country of origin, shortly after their arrival at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport after 4 p.m. Monday.

Senior Insp. Reynald Bustillo, acting chief investigator of the Bureau of Immigration unit at Naia, said the two men were sent back because they fit the profile of terrorists.

The immigration officers suspected that the two men were not Turkish but Iranians. The foreigners had no immigration departure stamps from Bahrain, they said.

Also on Monday, an Arab tourist was also barred from entering Manila for arrogantly complaining about the long queues at the immigration arrival center.

A dismayed Abdulhamed Y.H. Alkhardawi was sent on a return flight to Saudi Arabia shortly after his arrival Monday afternoon.

The 41-year-old Arab, who planned to go to the popular resort island of Boracay in Aklan province, protested the exclusion order against him, to no avail.

Alkhardawi's exclusion stemmed from the complaint of an immigration officer that the Arab tourist treated him with arrogance while complaining about the long lines of arriving passengers at the immigration counter.

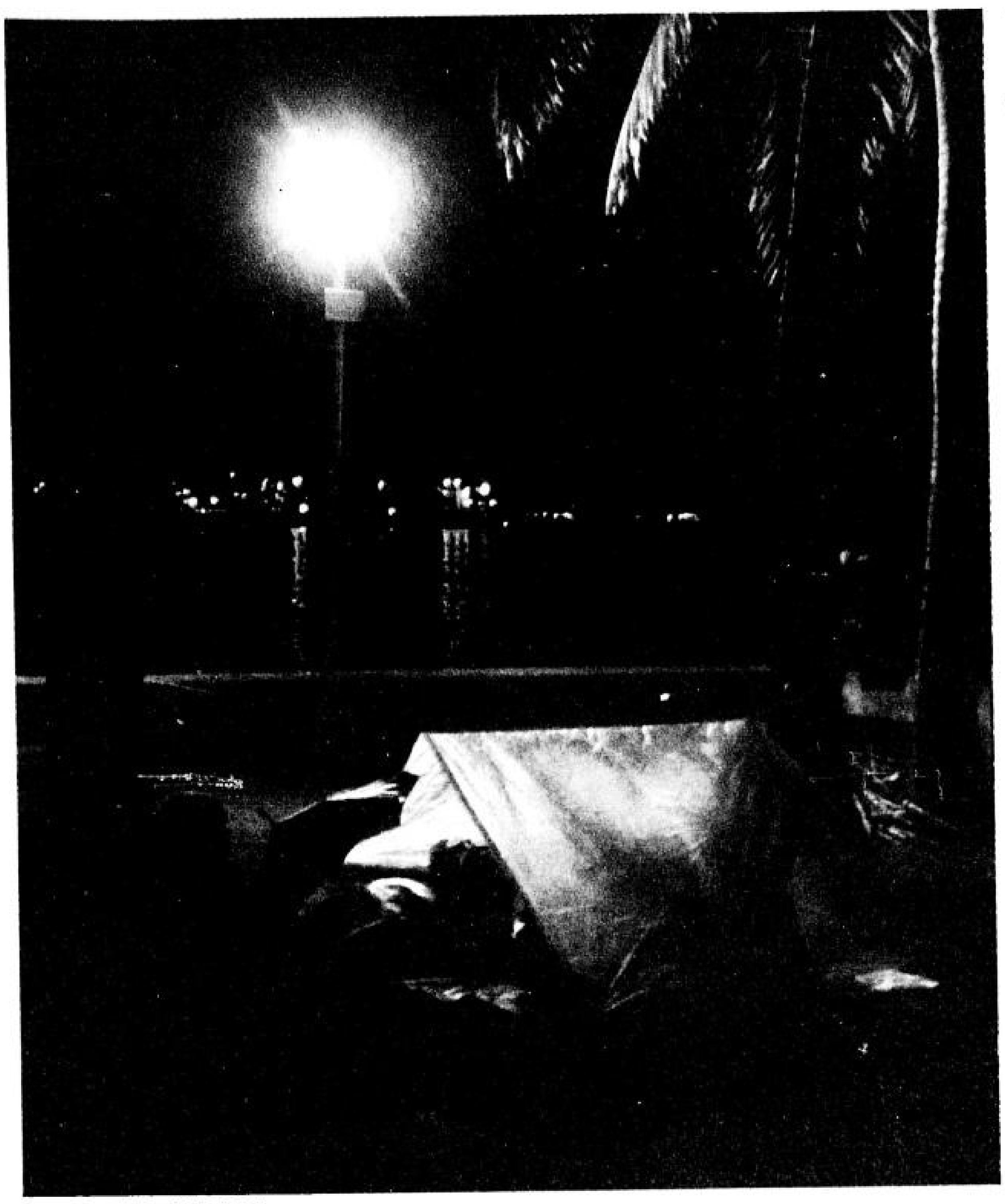
"He called me and then asked me at the top of his voice why the queues were too long," the immigration officer said. "But I told him to calm down and be patient. And he said, 'No, no, this should not be the case.'"

When summoned for questioning inside the immigration office, Alkhardawi suddenly turned apologetic and denied shouting at the officer.

"That's the way I talk," he claimed. "That's normal for me."

TJ Burgonio

ENTER THE DRAGON.



NEW YEAR, OLD LIFE
The new millennium may have arrived, but life for this homeless family remains the same. On the first days of the new year, its members still sleep under a plastic sheet by the Manila Bay breakwater on Roxas Boulevard. BETOY JOHNSON

Eavesdropping case against GMA-7 closed

THE SENATE impeachment court yesterday cleared GMA network of the complaint raised on Thursday by Sen. John Osmeña that a microphone installed in GMA's camera could have been used to bug the private conversations of the senators.

At the start of the impeachment trial yesterday, Senate president Aquilino Pimentel III read his recommendation to Chief Justice and presiding officer Hilario Davide Jr. and before the entire court.

The recommendation was for the closing of the eavesdropping case.

Pimentel said he found the explanation of GMA officials satisfactory and recommended "that the case be deemed closed."

Pimentel also ordered "that the microphone be returned to its owners."

All the senator-judges agreed with the recommendation.

In a letter to Davide, GMA senior .vice president Robert V. Barreiro Thursday night categorically stated that GMA was not recording the private conversations of the senator-judges.

Barreiro said the microphone was installed to pick up "ambient" sound or general background noise, a common practice, to lend authenticity to the TV coverage.

The microphone was removed from the camera and tied to the gallery railing only because a defective connection made the microphone tap noisily against the camera whenever the camera panned left or right, Barreiro said.

GMA-7 maintained that while all video feeds are recorded, private conversations are not recorded since the type of microphone in question is not designed for eavesdropping.

GMA-7 stressed there was no intention to eavesdrop or capture conversations of senator-judges as alleged by Osmeña. It said the microphone was in fact placed in full view of the gallery.

Still, GMA-7 offered to make available all the tapes of its coverage for scrutiny, if necessary.

On behalf of the network, Barreiro apologized to the court for any inadvertent disruptions the incident might have caused the impeachment proceedings.

Atienza: Focus on work, not impeachment

MANILA Mayor Lito Atienza reminded all city government officials not to get so engrossed in watching or listening to the impeachment trial at the Senate for they might be unwittingly neglecting their duties.

"I know that as citizens you have the right to keep yourself informed on matters of national importance," Atienza told City Hall employees on Wednesday. "As public servants, however, we also have a responsibility to the people and that should always come first.

"Your performance would definitely suffer if you spend an average of six hours or three-fourths of your daily work schedule watching the televised proceedings at the Senate," he added.

He said officials and personnel should also not be distracted by the recent bombings and instead focus on serving the public efficiently.

"We should continue to concentrate on how to increase our efficiency in delivering basic services to the people and leave the matter to the police who are trying their very best to maintain peace and order," the mayor said.

"It's hard not to be affected," he added. "The horrifying scene (of destruction from the bombing) that confronted me that day would forever be etched on my mind, but I have to set it aside so I can focus on my job." *Jerome Aning*

Amok stabs five

FIVE people were injured, two of them seriously, when an alleged mentally ill man ran amuck and stabbed them in Tondo, Manila yesterday morning.

Emmanuel Matic, 35, single and resident of Panday Pira Street in Tondo, tried to kill himself before being arrested by police, said Supt. Ernesto Ibay, commander of the Western Police District's Station 7.

The injured were identified as Matic's neighbors Estrellita de Asis-Hugo, 50, and her brother Roberto de Asis, 45; Adelaida Echelar, 55; Henry Roño, 34; and one Virgilio Selda. De Asis-Hugo and her brother are in critical condition, police said.

All were treated at the Jose R. Reyes Memorial Medical Center.

PO3 Arnold Echelar said Matic figured in a fistfight with several of his neighbors at 9:20 a.m. The cause of the fight has not been determined.

Echelar said she saw Matic wounded and lying on the sidewalk and brought him inside her house to treat his wounds.

Investigators said Matic was lying on a sofa when he went berserk and somehow got hold of a fan knife he found in Echelar's house. Matic then attacked Echelar, stabbing him in the back.

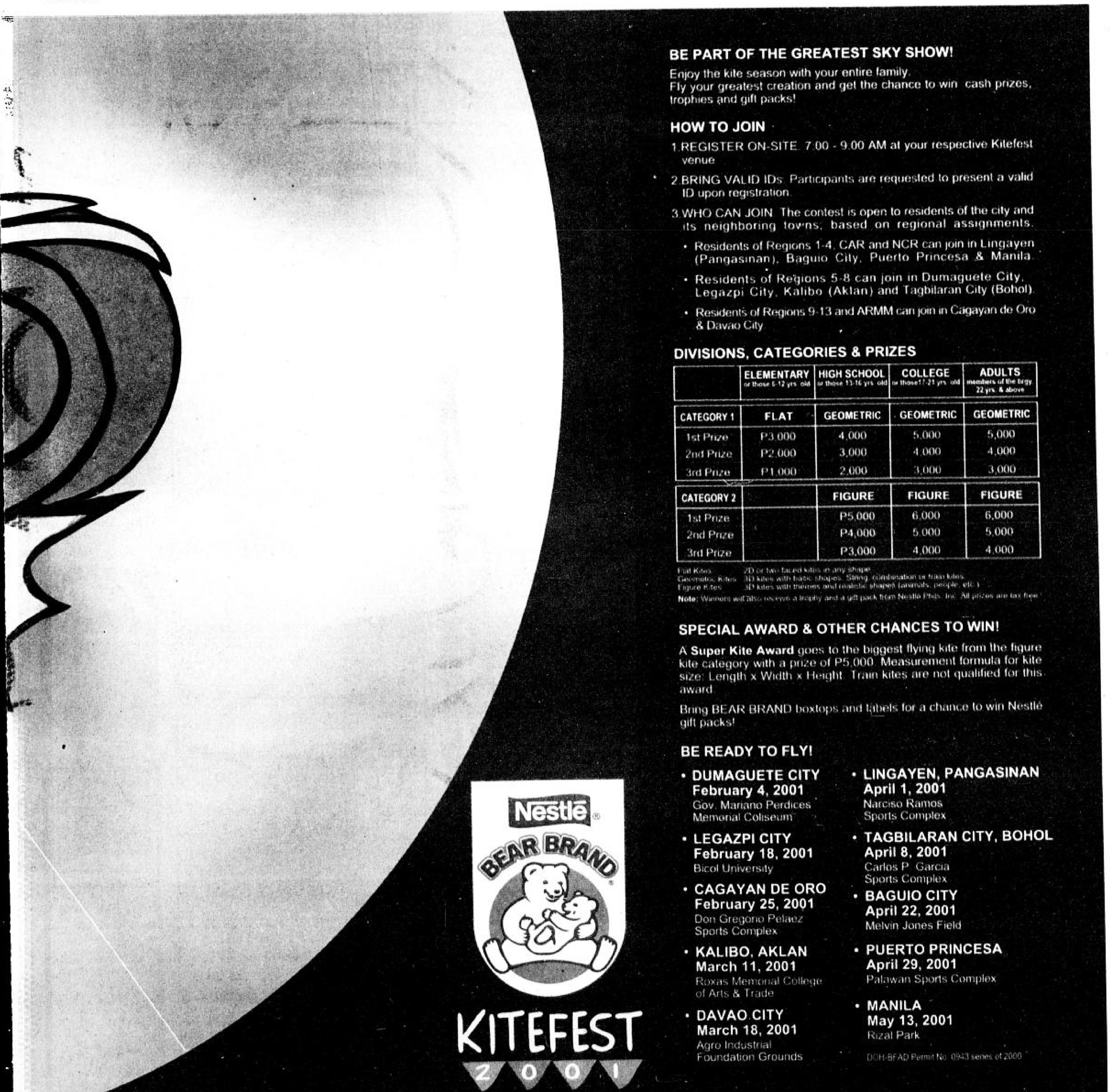
Echelar screamed for help as Matic tried to stab her again. Roño, the first neighbor who responded, was also attacked by Matic.

Roño was hit on the left arm.

Roño ran out of the house, followed by Matic, who began to attack other people, including Hugo who was hit on the arm and De Asis who was hit on the abdomen.

Matic was eventually subdued by neighbors and barangay authorities, but only after he stabbed chief *tanod* Selda in the right palm.

Matic, who was shouting and uttering unintelligible words, also tried to stab himself, police said. *Jerome Aning*



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   - Residents of Regions 9-13 and ARMM can join in Cagayan de Oro & Davao City.

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3rd Prize	P1,000	2,000	3,000	3,000
CATEGORY 2		FIGURE	FIGURE	FIGURE
1st Prize		P5,000	6,000	6,000
2nd Prize		P4,000	5,000	5,000
3rd Prize		P3,000	4,000	4,000

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  March 11, 2001
  Roxas Memorial College of Arts & Trade
- DAVAO CITY
  March 18, 2001
  Agro Industrial Foundation Grounds
- LINGAYEN, PANGASINAN
  April 1, 2001
  Narciso Ramos Sports Complex
- TAGBILARAN CITY, BOHOL
  April 8, 2001
  Carlos P. Garcia Sports Complex
- BAGUIO CITY
  April 22, 2001
  Melvin Jones Field
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  April 29, 2001
  Palawan Sports Complex
- MANILA
  May 13, 2001
  Rizal Park

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Gay-bashing rapper earns four Grammy nominations

NEW YORK—The record industry has showed it can, in fact, stomach and even stand Eminem.

The rapper's wickedly offensive but critically acclaimed "The Marshall Mathers LP" received four Grammy nominations Wednesday, including album of the year.

He and his mentor, Dr. Dre, who produced the album, received a combined nine Grammy nominations for it and "Dr. Dre—2001."

Eminem, whose songs bashed homosexuals and depicted the killing of his wife and the rape of his mother, also took a swipe at the academy.

"You think I give a damn about a Grammy? Half of you critics can't even stomach, let alone stand me," Eminem said in the song "The Real Slim Shady."

Also nominated for album of the year: perennial Grammy favorite Paul Simon for "You're the One," Beck for "Midnight Vultures," Radiohead for "Kid A," and Steely Dan for "Two Against Nature."

Paul Simon has won album of the year three times before and already owns 16 Grammys.

Besides Dr. Dre, Beyonce Knowles of the group Destiny's Child also had a leading five nominations for songwriting and for her work with the group. Among the nominations for Destiny's Child was record of the year for "Say My Name."

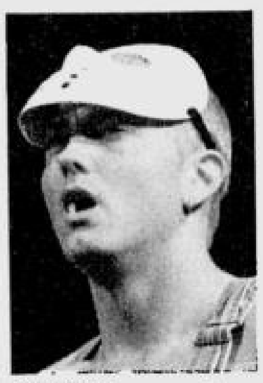
'N Sync, which had the year's best-selling album "No Strings Attached," garnered just two nominations. One was for record of the year, for "Bye Bye Bye."

Other nominations for record of the year include "Beautiful Day" by U2, "I Try" by Macy Gray, and "Music" by Madonna.

Madonna, who has never won a Grammy in a major category, was also nominated for female pop vocal performance and pop vocal album, but was surprisingly shut out of the album of the year category.

Country singer Faith Hill, whose "Breathe" was the top

GAY/ A23



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8	DOLBY SURROUND	THE 6TH DAY
9	DOLBY SURROUND	GATAS
10	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	MARKOVA: COMFORT GAY

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9	DOLBY SURROUND	TANGING YAMAN
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11	DOLBY SURROUND	LOST SOUL
12	DOLBY SURROUND	SPIRIT WARRIORS

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1	ULTRA SURROUND	GATAS
2	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	THE 6TH DAY
3	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	TANGING YAMAN

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2	DOLBY SURROUND	THE 6TH DAY
3	DOLBY DIGITAL	THE 6TH DAY
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5	DOLBY SURROUND	EMPERORS NEW GROOVE
6	DOLBY SURROUND	DEATH ROW
7	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	MARKOVA: COMFORT GAY
8	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	TANGING YAMAN
9	DOLBY SURROUND	GATAS
10	DOLBY SURROUND	SUGATANG PUSO
11	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	SPIRIT WARRIORS
12	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	PING LACSON STORY

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2	DOLBY SURROUND	GATAS
3	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	TANGING YAMAN
4	DOLBY SURROUND	GATAS
5	DOLBY SURROUND	MEET THE PARENTS
6	DOLBY SURROUND	EMPERORS NEW GROOVE
7	DTS	THE 6TH DAY
8	DOLBY DIGITAL	THE 6TH DAY
9	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	TANGING YAMAN
10	DOLBY SURROUND	SUGATANG PUSO
11	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	DEATH ROW
12	DOLBY SURROUND	PING LACSON STORY

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6	

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8	DEATH ROW
9	PING LACSON STORY

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7 (DOLBY)	THE 6TH DAY
8	EMPERORS NEW GROOVE

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3	GATAS

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5	EMPERORS NEW GROOVE

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4	GATAS

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2	GATAS
3	THE 6TH DAY

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REMAR-2	GATAS
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'THE EMPEROR'S NEW GROOVE'

A disappointing Disney movie the Mouse House can't save

By Alexis L. Loinas

REVIEW

LADIES and gentlemen of the moviegoing public, Disney has done the unimaginable. For the first time in recent memory, the powerhouse animation studio has succeeded in making an animated film which I believe is not only lackluster but surprisingly disengaging.

With "The Emperor's New Groove," the latest offering from the Mouse House, it's clear that studio pedigree and marketing savvy cannot save a film which seems to lack the trademark inspiration and inventiveness of most Disney movies.

This is quite sad, really, because no traditionally animated film produced by the studio since 1989's "The Little Mermaid" has been as much a commercial disappointment as "The Emperor's New Groove." Despite garnering glowing reviews from US critics, the movie failed to ignite the North American box office when it hit theaters in mid-December, earning an unspectacular $9.6 million in its opening weekend. In contrast, "Tarzan" swung in with a screaming $34 million when it opened in the summer of 1999.

Unless its paltry box office picks up, "Emperor" will have the dubious distinction of being Disney's first mainstream animated film since "Beauty and the Beast" (not counting "Fantasia 2000" which was initially released in large-format or IMAX-type theaters) not to cross the $100-million mark. On a more personal note, the film has the dubious distinction of being the only Disney movie that actually put me to sleep for a minute.

Don't be confused by its title. "The Emperor's New Groove" doesn't have anything to do with "The Emperor's New Clothes." The film centers on pompous, egotistic Kuzco, ruler of a mythical mountain kingdom who is so despicable in his spoiled ways he doesn't think twice about decimating an idyllic hillside village to make way for his summer home. When an amiable peasant named Pacha begs Kuzco to reconsider, the emperor simply shrugs him off and goes forward with the plan.

Unfortunately for Kuzco, his conniving adviser Yzma has devious designs to overthrow him. But when her plan to kill the emperor with a deadly serum goes awry, Kuzco is instead turned into a bumbling, fussy llama who inadvertently ends up being shipped off to Pacha's hillside village aboard the peasant's cart.

Together, the two must make their way back to the kingdom so that Kuzco can reclaim the throne before Yzma tracks him down. Along the way, Kuzco learns a thing or two about humility, patience and friendship.

Sensitivity and modesty

Story-wise, "The Emperor's New Groove" is noteworthy in that it teaches younger audiences the value of being sensitive to others and keeping a modest outlook in life. Other than that, the film is quite disappointing because it seems bereft of the visual sophistication that other Disney films like "Mulan" and "Hunchback of Notre Dame" had in abundance.

Here, certain scenes look like they were plucked straight out of bad Saturday morning cartoons. Color palettes are somewhat dull and panoramic vistas come across as flat. Even some of the characters look like they were recycled from other animated films. Many characters fade away when their scenes are over, with the exception of diva-like Yzma who clearly stands out with her plunging necklines and sexy stilettos (she's voiced by Eartha Kitt, which makes complete sense).

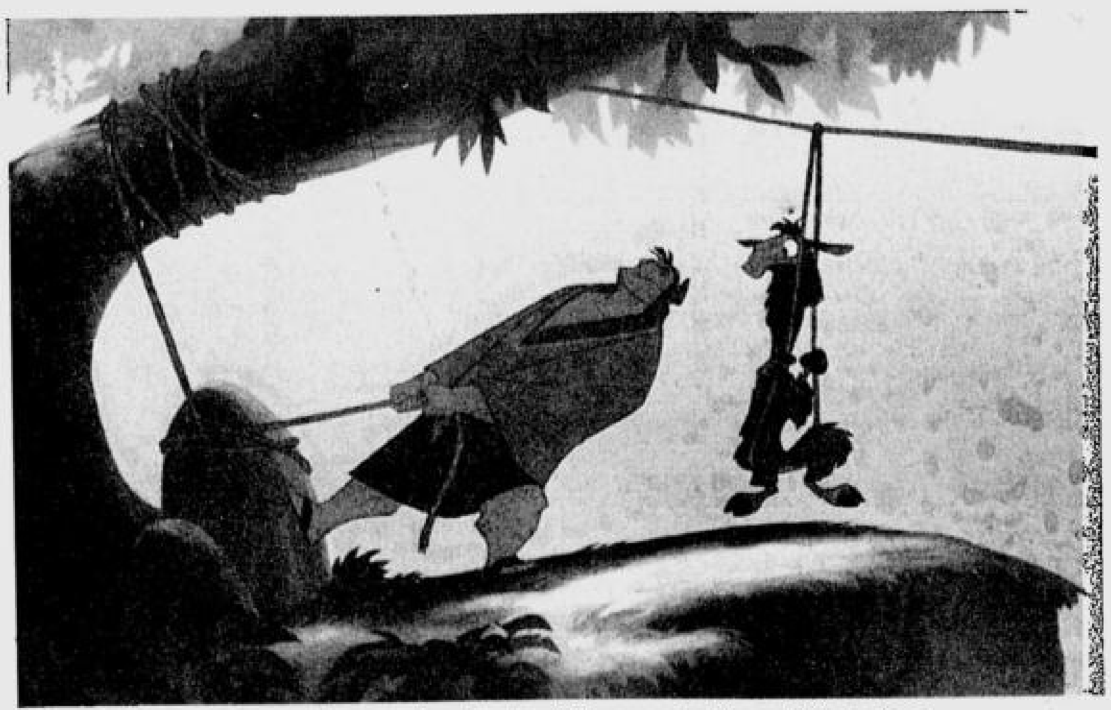
Predictable

More than a dearth of visual sophistication, the film begs for the kind of spontaneous narrative flair which made something like "Aladdin" so zippy and zany. In "Emperor," things unfold with the one-two-three predictability of a sitcom: set up the scenario, deliver the punchline, follow through with a wisecrack.

At a certain point, the film's antics become so prosaic and perfunctory it's almost unbelievable to think that this is the same studio which gave us a hyperbolic genie, a flirtatious candlestick and ghetto-sounding Chinese dragon.

In "Emperor," we're left with an amazingly grating and whining llama voiced by the amazingly grating and whining David Spade. This, of course, is in perfect keeping with the film's sitcom sensibilities; unfortunately, I was never able to sit through any of David Spade's sitcoms (his latest, "Just Shoot Me," made me want to do just that), probably because I was always subconsciously repelled by the actor's annoying on-screen persona.

Half-baked



LACKLUSTER. The reviewer says *the* uninspired Disney animation put him to sleep.

Unlike other Disney films which showcase Broadway-style song-and-dance sequences, "The Emperor's New Groove" features several low-key pop numbers by Sting, a musical strategy that worked to great effect in "Tarzan" (which included songs by Phil Collins).

Interestingly, the US media have widely reported that "Emperor" actually began as a musical, with a substantial number of songs by Sting figuring prominently in the original film. When that version didn't fly (it was reportedly too dark), many of Sting's tunes were chucked, the remaining footage was salvaged and the film was retailored to be a feel-good buddy flick.

Placing things in this context, it's easy to see why "Emperor" lacks cohesiveness and appears half-baked, with many of the characters not fully fleshed-out.

All things considered, "The Emperor's New Groove" is sadly sophomoric, at least by Disney standards—an afterthought of a movie which, after the stylistic strides made by "Tarzan," seems a step back for the studio.

And despite the occasional laugh and visual pun, in the end "Emperor" loses its groove.

Gay-bashing . . .

(From page A22)

single of 2000, did not receive a nomination for record of the year. But the songwriters of "Breathe" were nominated for song of the year and Hill received three nominations.

Britney Spears, one of the year's leading album sellers, was nominated for pop vocal album for "Oops! . . . I Did It Again" and female pop vocal performance for the song of the same name, but was snubbed in the major categories.

The 43rd annual Grammy awards will be broadcast live on CBS Feb. 21. Awards will be presented in 100 categories.

Eminem was shut out of the prestigious record and song of the year categories.

Eminem, who declined comment Wednesday, had already won two Grammys for his debut album, "The Slim Shady LP."

"He's kind of a non-denominational abuser," said Michael Greene, president of the National Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences. "He hates everybody. He hates himself, he uses the microphone as a therapist most of the time and doesn't edit himself."

As for Eminem's lyrical swipe at the Grammys, Greene shrugged it off.

"It's easy to criticize the organization, but we love the artist whether they love us or not. It ain't a problem," he said. *AP*

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1	2	3
TANGING YAMAN 12:20, 4:45, 5:10, 7:35, 10:00	MEET THE PARENTS 12:00, 2:30, 5:00, 7:30, 10:00	MEET THE PARENTS 12:50, 3:20, 5:50, 8:20
THE 6TH DAY 11:40, 2:10, 4:40, 7:10, 9:40	EMPERORS NEW GROOVE 1:40, 3:30, 5:20, 8:30	EMPERORS NEW GROOVE 12:50, 2:40, 4:30, 6:20, 8:10, 10:00

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SCHWARZENEGGER
THE 6TH DAY

THE 6TH DAY
(MTRCB Rating PG-13)
11:30 AM/ 2:00 PM
4:30 / 7:00 / 9:30
12:00 MN

MEET
THE PARENTS
(MTRCB Rating PG-13)
11:30 AM/ 2:00 PM
4:30 / 7:00 / 9:30
12:00 MN

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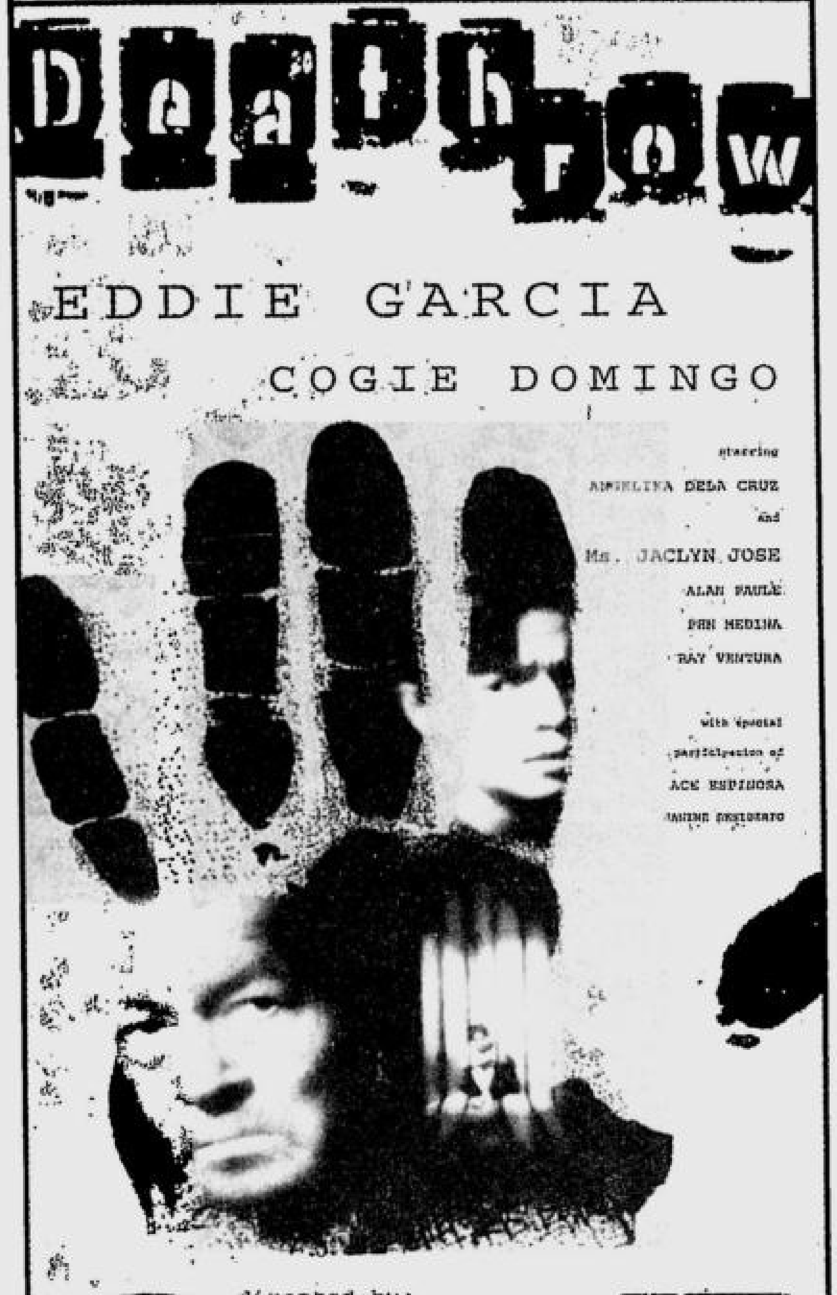

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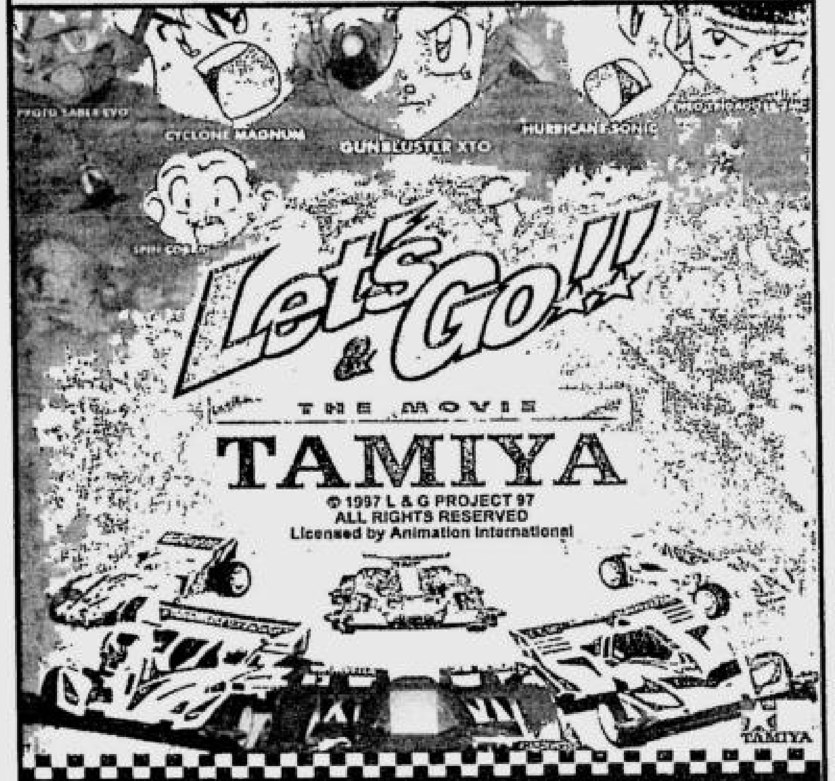

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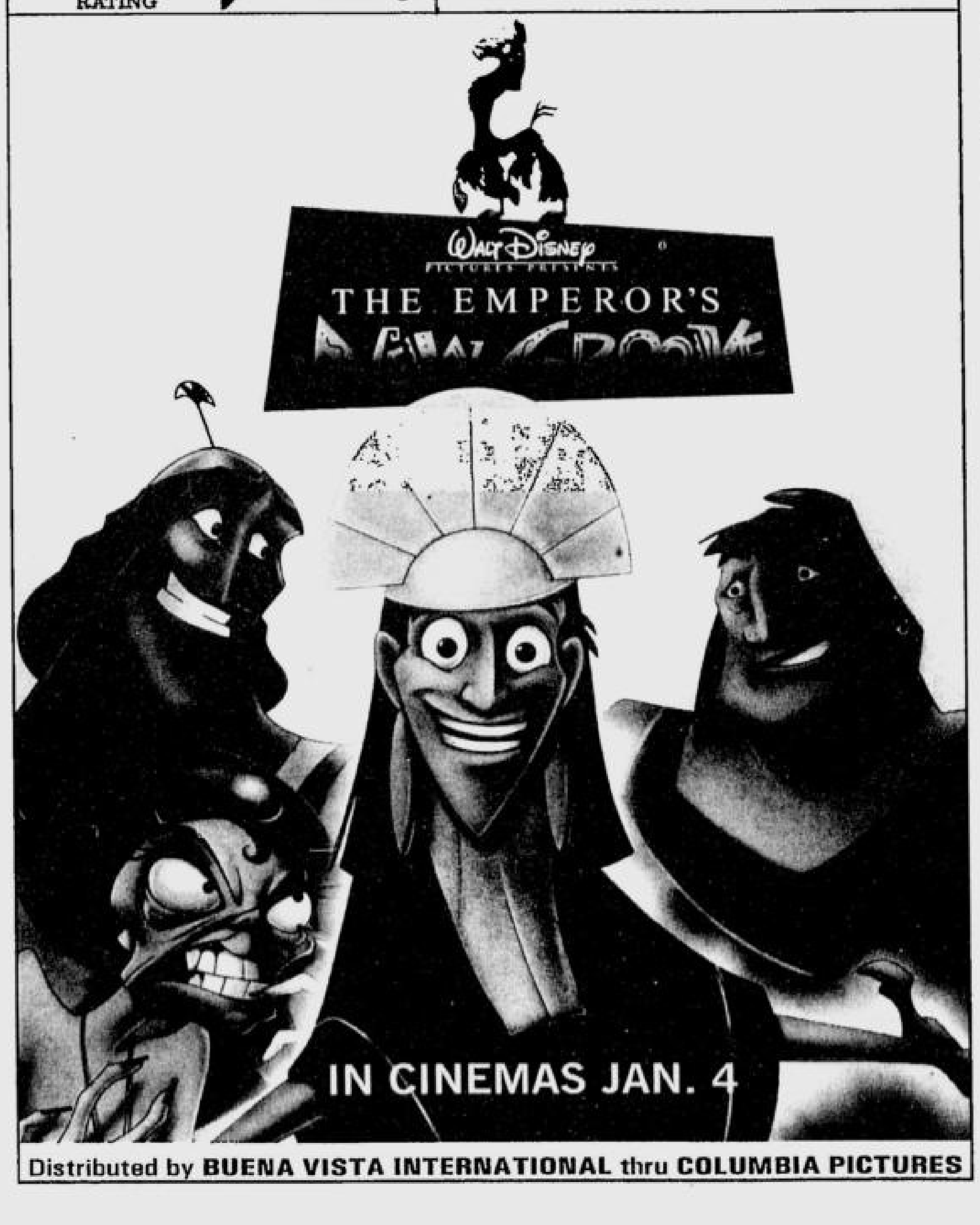

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Singapore wakes up to a Filipino anchor

By Leah Salterio

HAPPY HIZON. 'I'm enjoying my job,' says the Filipino whose face many Singaporeans wake up to every day.

RICO Hizon, the only Filipino anchor in the Singapore-based business news network, CNBC Asia, started out as a crew member of McDonald's.

Between McDonald's and CNBC, it seems it's always been good news for Hizon.

Now a familiar face among cable TV viewers hooked to the 24-hour channel, Hizon left Philippine broadcasting almost six years ago, in the process giving up a career as a GMA newscaster.

He has not regretted his decision, even if it meant being away from his immediate family. Initially stationed in Hong Kong, where the CNBC headquarters opened in Asia, he is now happily settled in Singapore, with his wife of two years, Melannie Syquia-Hizon.

As a CNBC anchor, Hizon reports on financial and business developments throughout the Asia-Pacific region, a job that requires a great deal of composure and excellent communication skills.

"It's been an exciting six years with the business news network," says Hizon of his CNBC job. "I've seen the station grow from its humble beginnings in the boondocks of Chai Wan in Hong Kong with just a million cable subscribers to a regional force with more than 20 million viewers in the Asia-Pacific region and Europe."

The best part of working abroad, he says, is the independence. "When there's a problem, there's no one to turn to but each other. We have to fix the leaks, whether we like it or not. But married life has been fantastic, wonderful and very happy."

He also considers the purchasing power abroad an added perk, considering the dwindling peso. "We get more bang for our buck in Asia," he says. "The Hong Kong dollar is pegged to the greenback and the Singapore dollar is the strongest currency in Southeast Asia."

All in all, he loves living in progressive Singapore. "Singapore is so clean and disciplined. No one is above the law. You cannot litter, chew gum or jaywalk."

The only downside is not being able to own a car. "Buying a car, especially a brand new one, in Singapore is so expensive. But transportation is so convenient, so there isn't really a need for one."

No holds barred

After living abroad for nearly six years, Hizon doesn't feel homesick anymore.

"Homesickness is not even in my vocabulary. I have settled very well in Singapore with Melanie by my side. With the Philipines always on the radar screen of the network, I've been fortunate to be the reporter sent to Manila."

Since President Estrada got enmeshed in "juetengate," Hizon has been visiting Manila very often. "It's also an opportunity for me to see my parents who are now by themselves. They're both 72 years old, have been married for 44 years, and are as sweet as ever."

Last month, he was in Manila for a no-holds-barred interview with President Estrada.

"I was looking forward to it," Hizon says. "There I was, doing a 30-minute, exclusive interview with the man being accused of receiving jueteng payoffs and kickbacks, a man with numerous mistresses with alleged palatial mansions in Metro Manila.

"But he was coached well by his advisers and he used several words or terms over and over during the interview that I will never forget—'black propaganda,' 'allegations' and 'succumbed.'"

Asked if he thinks Mr. Estrada was lying, Hizon says, "It's up to the viewers to decide. I think you can tell if a person is lying through his body movements, his facial expressions and his eyes. You be the judge."

Waking up to Rico

At CNBC, Hizon works in the morning shift, to which he has been accustomed in the past decade, including his stint with GMA. He goes to work at 4 a.m. and starts writing stories or working on his interviews. At 6 a.m., he goes on air, does a sports update on "Squawk Box" at 8:30 a.m., anchors "Market Watch" at 10 a.m. and ends his work day with a noontime show, "Power Lunch."

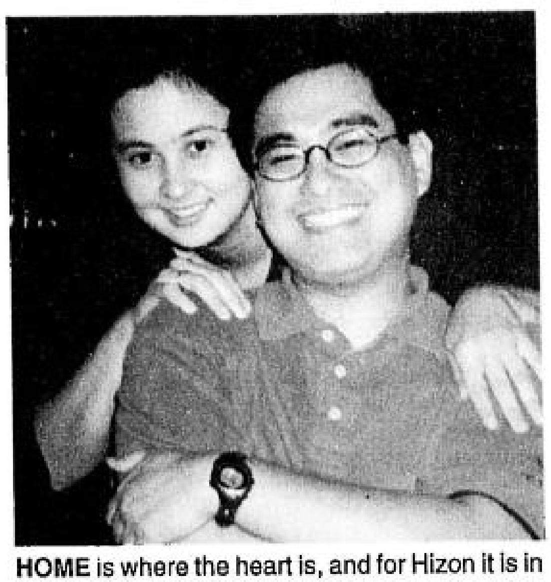
"It's a hectic daytime schedule but I love it. I think I'm already typecast as the morning anchor you wake up to.

"I'm on my 10th year in the morning shift and I've worked with 12 co-anchors." At GMA, he worked with co-anchors Vicky Morales, Cristina Pecson and Karen Davila. At CNBC, he has worked with Der Hoi Yin, Sasha Salama, Sumire Sugimoto, Lynde McCormick, Lorraine Hahn, Sydnie Kohara, Eunice Yoon, Christine Tan and Suchita Vadlamani.

"Most people tell me they see me on TV while they're having breakfast, drinking coffee or exercising. I've become part of a daily routine."

A long way from McDo

Hizon claims working for an international network hasn't changed him. "I'd like to think I'm still the same old Rickitics from way back, high school, university and GMA 7."



HOME is where the heart is, and for Hizon it is in Singapore, with wife Melannie Syquia.

His achievements in international broadcasting are treasured even by his previous employers. As a former crew member of McDonald's in it's first branch in Makati, he was the only Asian who was cited by the international burger chain in its 1999 annual report, for having built a successful career.

"Like many young people," the chain's annual report said, "Rico Hizon earned his first real paycheck working at McDonald's in Manila, Philippines. Although he saved some, he recalls spending much of his hard-earned money to build his prized record collection."

Hizon bested dozen other successful Asians, including the young man who would become popular actor Richard Gomez, who started their careers as McDonald's crew members.

Rising from the ranks

Before going international, the youngest son of Jose and Leonor Hizon rose from the ranks doing production work at GMA. After obtaining a communication arts degree (major in broadcasting) from De La Salle University, he worked as production assistant for "Uncle Bob's Lucky Seven Club," earning P1,000 a month.

He later became segment producer of "Issues and Answers," hosted by Art Borjal, and "Viewpoint," hosted by Dong Puno Jr., who would later become Mr. Esmtrada's press secretary and spokesperson.

Before TV work, Hizon taught broadcasting at DLSU.

From 1991 to 1995, he hosted GMA's early morning daily news program, "Business Today." He also did the hourly weekend news reports on GMA.

He joined CNBC in March 1995, three months before the network started on-air operations. It was during his coverage of the Pope's Manila visit that he was asked to go to Hong Kong for a day, to meet with NBC senior vice president Sturtevant Peter, who asked him to join CNBC as news anchor.

His friend Celine Silva, then the Manila Bureau chief of Reuters, had recommended Hizon.

"I am enjoying my job," he says of his CNBC stint. "I wouldn't have stayed this long if I am not happy with what I am doing. Not all male anchors in the Philippines are given the opportunity to be on international TV."

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BUSINESS

RAUL O. MARCELO, Editor ■ CORRIE S. NARISMA, Assistant Editor

December inflation hits 19-month high

By Doris C. Dumlao

HEAVY Christmas spending combined with pressure from higher oil prices pushed up the December inflation rate to a 19-month high of 6.6 percent from the previous month's 6 percent.

The National Statistics Office reported yesterday that the uptick in last month's inflation, which was well within the expectation of market analysts, was brought by the continued increases in the prices of food, beverages and tobacco, services, housing and repair, and fuel, light and water.

The December inflation rate was much higher than the 4.3 percent recorded in the same month last year. For the whole of 2000, however, this brought the average inflation rate to only 4.4 percent or much lower than the 6.7-percent average posted in 1999.

Also contributing to the uptrend in inflation were the sharp peso depreciation and higher interest rates seen since October when the "Juetengate" scandal broke out.

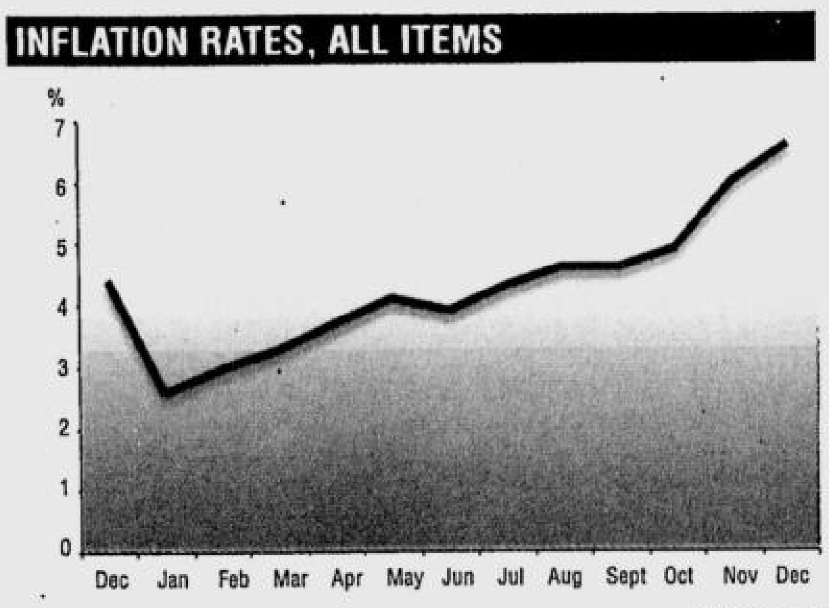
The year-on-year inflation rate for food alone further went up to 5.2 percent in December from 4.5 percent in November. Even on a month-on-month basis, the holiday season saw a big demand for meat, pushing up the price of pork, beef and chicken. The nationwide meat index climbed to 1.3 percent from 0.6 percent in November.

Although the impact of two previous typhoons was felt largely in November, the NSO report still indicated some lagged effect, specially on vegetables and fish in some regions. These resulted in price hikes in brackish fish species. The supply of marine fish was also cut short by the cooler temperatures.

The price hikes were felt more in areas outside Metro Manila where inflation picked up to 6.3 percent from 5.5 percent in November. On the other hand, inflation in Metro Manila stood at the same 7.4 percent level seen in November.

Wise Securities head of research Jose Vistan said the uptick in the December inflation could be "a sign

DECEMBER/ B2



SOURCE: NATIONAL STATISTICS OFFICE

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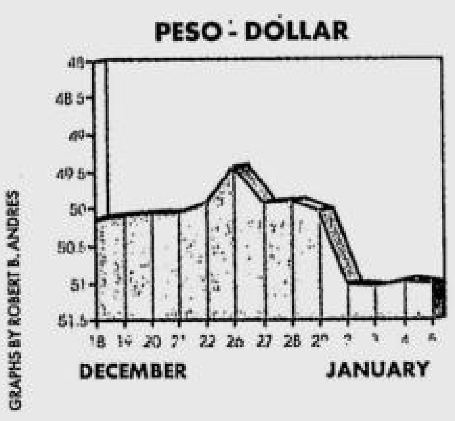
INDICATORS

CURRENCIES



GRAPHS BY ROBERT B. ANDRES

Peso-Dollar Rate

₱51.00 = $1

As of 5 p.m., Jan. 5, 2001

¥116.30 = $1

The US dollar was trading at 116.30 as of 5 p.m., Jan. 5, 2001

GOLD:$268/268.40

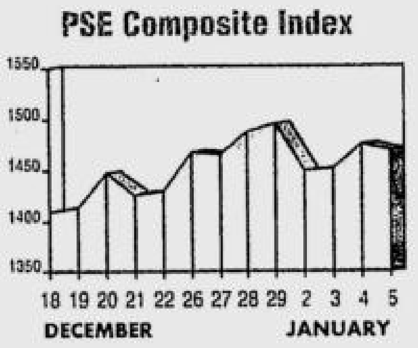
per ounce Hong Kong, Jan. 5, 2001

STOCK MARKET

Stocks close lower

SHARES ended broadly weaker in light trade yesterday after a 1.66-percent gain in the previous session, as players resumed with their cautious stance due to political and economic uncertainties related to the impeachment trial of President Estrada.

The 33-share composite index lost 6.03 points, or 0.41 percent, to close at 1,469.08. Losers outpaced gainers, 34 to 19, with 37 issues unchanged. *Reuters*



(See stock market report on Page B4)

Bangko Sentral cuts overnight rates anew

THE BANGKO Sentral ng Pilipinas said it would cut overnight interest rates by half a percentage point after the US Federal Reserve reduced its benchmark interest rate by that amount.

Amando Tetangco, deputy governor of the Bangko Sentral, said the policy-making Monetary Board decided in its regular weekly meeting to reduce overnight rates by 50 basis points starting Monday.

The central bank's overnight borrowing rate will fall to 13 percent from 13.50 percent, and the overnight lending rate will decline to 15.25 percent from 15.75 percent.

The central bank may have gone ahead with the cuts, despite a weakening peso, because consumer prices rose 6.6 percent in December compared with a government forecast of 7 percent, said Cecilia Tanchoco, an economist at the Bank of Philippine Islands.

"The 6.6-percent inflation rate, coupled with the surprise Fed rate cut, left the central bank with a lot of flexibility to cut rates," Tanchoco said.

The peso fell to a record of 52 per US dollar on Tuesday on investor concern the weekend bombing spree that killed 22 and wounded 102 would lead to more violent confrontations between the Estrada administration and its opponents.

Some analysts said the renewed weakness in the peso, which fell by as much as 2 percent on Tuesday, could have stopped the central bank from cutting rates.

In December, the central bank cut overnight rates by 1.5 percentage points. The past two cuts offset a four percentage point increase in October aimed at stemming a decline in the peso to record lows in the wake of corruption allegations against President Estrada.

Higher rates are choking investment and spending in an economy already battered by falling exports and uncertainty about the outcome of Mr. Estrada's impeachment trial.

Government economists said economic growth probably slow this year to between 3 percent and 3.5 percent from this year's 4 percent. *Bloomberg*

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Makro to go into retailing

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

WHILE other foreign retail giants have deferred or abandoned their investment plans in the country due to the political crisis, Dutch retail giant Makro NV has agreed to pump in at least $7.5 million (P375 million) to expand into retailing.

A Department of Trade and Industry official revealed Makro's plan to comply with the $7.5-million minimum paid-up capital requirement for foreign retailers interested in running wholly owned stores in the Philippines under the Retail Trade Liberalization Law.

Makro has been operating in the Philippines since 1996 through Makro Philippines, where it has the biggest share of 38 percent. Its partners are Ayala Land Inc. (22 percent) and SM Investments (30 percent).

Makro's decision to expand its presence in the country contrasts sharply to the moves of French retail giants Casino Guichard-Perrachon and Carrefour to junk their plans to invest in the country. Casino was supposed to bail out troubled retailer Uniwide Holdings while Carrefour had been negotiating with the Rustan group for a tie-up.

The DTI official did not reveal whether Makro would go into retailing on its own or with its partners, which also run profitable shopping mall operations in the country.

If Makro decides to go into retailing with its existing partners, the company can own up to 60 percent of the venture as long as it invests no less than $2.5 million in paid-up capital.

The DTI has been tasked to prequalify the prospective foreign retailers which, under the qualifications cited under the Retail Law, should be major international companies whose net worth are at least $200 million (P8 billion) or $25 million (P1 billion) for luxury stores; with five branches or franchises overseas (or with one store capitalized at $25 million), and a track record in retailing of at least five years.

Makro currently has four supermarket-warehouses—Cainta, Cavite, Novaliches and Parañaque. These stores are volume-driven, low-cost, self-service, cash-and-carry trading operations which provide business opportunities for enterprising Filipinos retailers and caterers and institutions such as *sari-sari* stores, restaurants, hotels, cafeterias and hospitals.

Meantime, Wal-Mart Stores Inc., the world's largest retailer, was reported to be considering investing in Uniwide Holdings Inc. after a French retailer dropped plans to take over the Philippine discounter.

Uniwide Receiver Monico Jacob earlier said two potential buyers will come to Manila within two weeks, after Casino Guichard-Perrachon SA, France's No. 2 publicly traded food retailer, unexpectedly canceled its $100-million purchase.

In October, newspapers said Wal-Mart executives met with officials of the Board of Investments to discuss the company's plans after the country ended a 45-year ban on foreigners owning retail businesses.

Uniwide fell 2 centavos, or 6.3 percent, to 30 centavos. It fell 37 percent yesterday after the Casino pullout. *With a report from Bloomberg*

Brokerage houses trim operations

POOR market conditions, which have made the Philippine bourse the worst performing in Asia, are prompting local stock brokerage houses to streamline their operations.

Worse, others are even thinking of getting out of the equities business saying that the legal framework, particularly the implementing rules and regulations of the Securities Regulation Code, is aggravating the woes of the battered sector.

In separate disclosures to the Philippine Stock Exchange yesterday, PNB Securities Inc. and Angping and Associates Securities Inc. said they had shut down some of their branch offices effective Dec. 31.

PNB Securities said four of its branches—namely those in Angeles City, Bacolod City, Iloilo City and Cebu City—have ceased operations.

Angping and Associates, for its part, said it had closed three of its offices such those in Caloocan, Tarlac and Iloilo City.

This developed as stock market liquidity had dropped to its most critical level in history due to the political uncertainties hounding the country. The main share Philippine Stock Exchange composite index fell by 30 percent last year, the worst drop seen in the region.

Earlier, at least two foreign brokerage houses—Sun Hung Kai Securities of Hong Kong and OCBC Securities of Singapore—shut down their operations in the Philippines.

As market conditions continue to deteriorate, other brokers are also starting to review their business plans.

Securities Specialist president Francisco Villaroman, for instance, said he believed that the stringent IRR of the Securities Regulation Code promulgated by the Securities and Exchange Commission would further choke the industry.

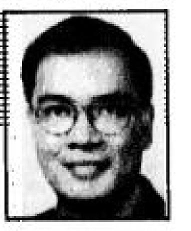
"The brokers are walking dead. I myself am planning to get out of this business," he said, noting that some other brokers shared his sentiment.

Villaroman said the SEC did not listen to the side of the brokers and was now trying to force the consolidation of brokerage houses through higher capitalization requirements.

"The PSE's present situation may be likened to a little bird being held captive in the hands of its master; the tighter it is squeezed, the more difficult it is for the little bird to survive and function efficiently. But if its master decides to hold it firmly yet gently, allowing it enough freedom to learn to be on its own, then it could very well be on its way to growth," PSE president Ramon T. Garcia said. *Doris Dumlao*

Real estate of the nation

BREAKTIME



Conrado R. Banal III

IT'S easily the most expensive office building venture in the whole nation, although it's at the fringes of the CBD. These are not initials of another fictitious name in another secret account in another friendly bank. The letters stand for "central business district."

In this country, that should be along and around Ayala Avenue in Makati. And so of course I refer to the two jolly green towers at the corner of Ayala and Sen. Gil J. Puyat Avenues. The ones owned by RCBC Realty, which is a subsidiary of the bank RCBC. The buildings look gigantic, the administration of the man named Band . . . Wrist Band . . . even decided that, even if they're just buildings, they should be given the same status as Clark. This only used to be an entire US Air Force base.

The government gave the buildings what was known as special economic zone status. They got the approval as an "IT" zone, with the letters again standing for "information technology" and not a fictitious name. Thus, they got a special treatment. In short, tax-free.

* * *

OUR featured letter writer today is none other than Perry Uy, president of RCBC Realty. He wrote me that the buildings do not get any tax exemption whatsoever, but only the firms which locate there. Hmm.

In plain language, those firms are the "buyers" of the space in the most expensive office-building venture in the country. And Uy wrote in reaction to my column last Tuesday. He wanted to comment on things in this column "that are incorrect."

He wrote: "The twin tower project is known as the RCBC Plaza and is jointly owned by the RCBC Land (60 percent) and the government of Singapore Investment Corp. (40 percent). RCBC Land is in turn owned by RCBC (75 percent) and Pan Malayan Management and Investment Corp. (25 percent)."

"The land where the building is located is previously owned by China Banking Corp. and was purchased by the RCBC group sometime in the early 1980s. The issue regarding it being an open space had long been resolved by the Housing and Land Use Regulatory Board (HLURB). Prior to the start of development of the project in 1996, all permits, licenses and clearances with both the national and local government units were complied with."

* * *

ALRIGHT then, since I, like Wrist Band, am now trying to reform myself, I will not comment on Uy's comment anymore regarding local government approvals and such. But I tell you, it's quite tempting.

Anyway, Uy continues: "RCBC Realty already secured a syndicated loan from six participating banks in the amount of P1.7 billion (not P5 billion and which as you mentioned is still in our process of "sounding off' some banks). The members of the syndicated lenders are China Bank, Allied Bank and Allied Savings Bank, Banco de Oro, Philbust, and East-West Bank."

"The RCBC Plaza has also been designated by the Philippine Export Zone Authority (Peza) as an IT zone. As such, Peza-qualified and -registered IT firms when located in this building will receive incentives under the program. However, RCBC Realty as owner-developer has not been granted tax or any other incentives under this program of Peza."

There's more in the letter, but I must confess I find most of it as just niceties. Anyway, Uy parts off with "RCBC Plaza will showcase the attractiveness of the Philippines for foreign investors to locate here in 'higher value undertaking' under the IT zone program." Yeah, of course, but please make my mother's house an IT zone too.

* * *

REAL estate, as you know, is not exactly doing great in this nation of "jueteng" lords who can become heroes of the opposition overnight. Like it or not, the RCBC, ah, "twin towers" must have something different to attract buyers. The Wrist Band administration actually went out of its way, and on a limb, to give the project tax-free privileges.

Reports went around, which were nevertheless denied by the RCBC group, about the deep involvement of some of its key men in the campaign in the business community to oust Wrist Band.

Thus word also went around that the Wrist Band administration may yet take back the tax-free privileges of the, er, "twin towers." After all, big business is saying that Wrist Band is not only the world's stupidest and horniest man, he is also the world's most vengeful SOB. Maybe the idea occurred to some in the beleaguered administration.

But whatever they say in big business about Wrist Band, he cannot afford to antagonize business any further. In fact, he must woo back big business right now! So I guess the RCBC project is safe from him. Still, it doesn't make real estate prospects any brighter, does it?

Oil firms' plan to postpone IPO faces legal problem

By Raul C. Dancel

AN AMENDMENT to the oil industry deregulation law may be needed before Caltex Philippines Inc. and Pilipinas Shell Petroleum Corp. can defer their initial public offerings this year, a spokesperson for Petron Corp. said.

"If the IPO is part of the deregulation law, an amendment may be needed. We have to look into the requirement of the law," Petron spokesperson Antonio Pelayo told the INQUIRER.

Pelayo said Petron "understands the predicament that they (Caltex and Shell) are in. The stock market is down and the economy is really not good. Timing is really very important."

"But at the end of the day, parameters have to be drawn," he said.

Pilipinas Shell and Caltex are required under the oil industry deregulation law to offer shares to the public on or before Feb. 28 this year, but these firms insist that a slump in the local bourse will tug at their bottom lines.

The two oil refiners—the industry's No. 2 and No. 3—have asked the Department of Justice's opinion on whether they can delay their offerings until market conditions improve.

Shares of the country's biggest oil firm, Petron, are already being traded.

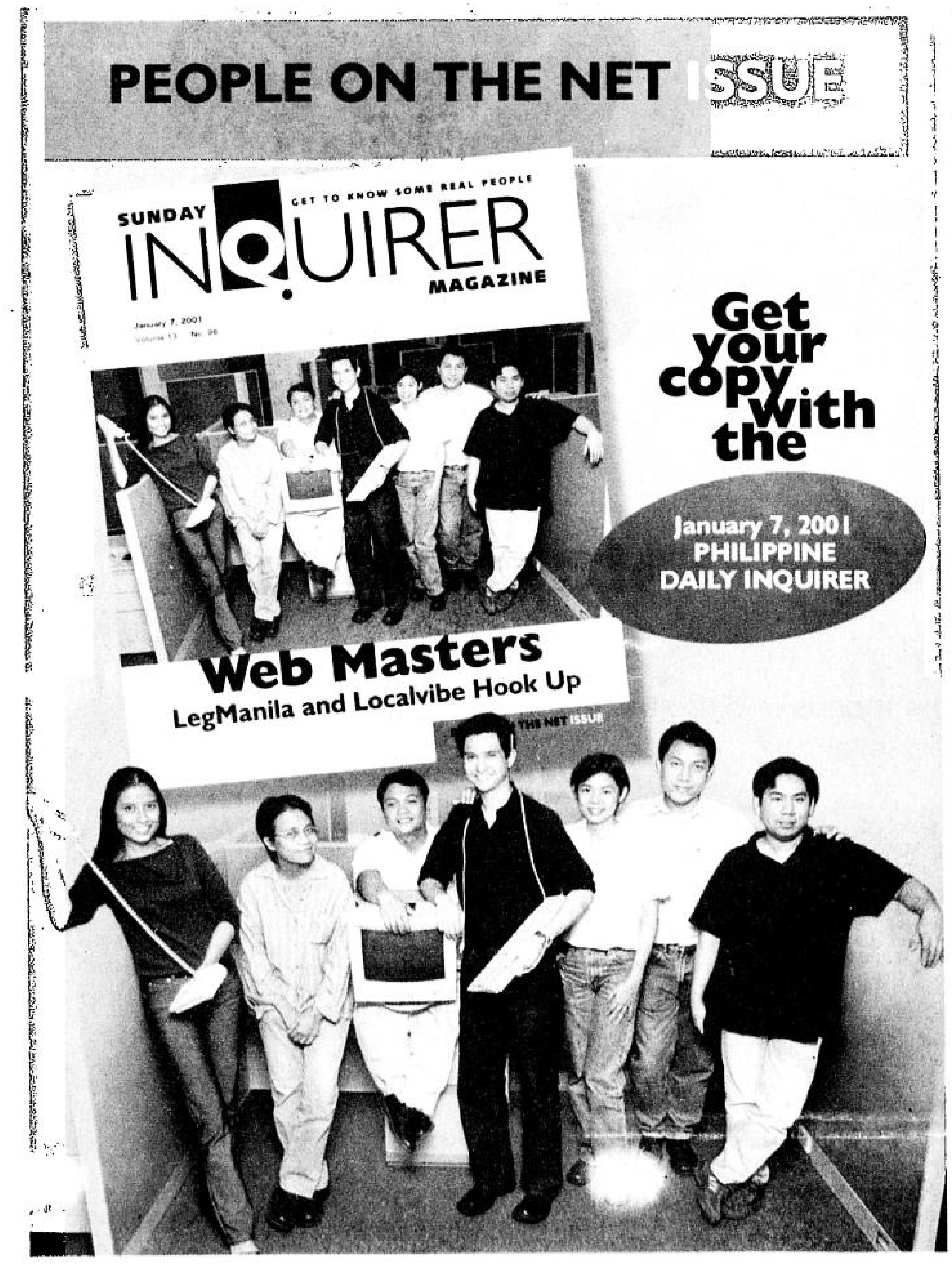
Section 22 of the Oil Deregulation Act of 1998 requires local oil refiners to let the public own at least 10 percent of their equities.

Caltex and Pilipinas Shell have already asked the Department of Finance and the Securities and Exchange Commission to allow them to defer their IPOs. Pilipinas Shell has yet to declare that it will proceed with an offering in February while Caltex is asking for an indefinite postponement.

In a joint position paper, Pilipinas Shell and Caltex said an IPO at this time is likely to have material and negative consequences for the Philippine government, the investment community, the faith of investors in the economy, in general, and the securities market, in particular."

Caltex is owned by US oil giants Texaco Inc. and Chevron USA Inc., producing about 72,000 barrels of oil a day locally. Pilipinas Shell is a subsidiary of the Royal Dutch/Shell Group of Companies.

The country's stock market has been hit hard by a stock price manipulation scandal involving property firm Fairmont Holdings Inc., formerly known as BW Resources Corp., and President Estrada's Senate corruption trial.



December inflation . . .

(From page B1)

that inflation for the first half of 2001 is on the way up."

Vistan said he was expecting inflation to rise to 7 to 8 percent early this year owing to the lower base last year. "This could put pressure on the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (regarding) its monetary policies," he said.

When inflation is on the rise, the Bangko Sentral is usually under pressure to tighten its grip on interest rates to mop up excess liquidity in the system.

UOB Securities research head Raul Ruiz, on the other hand, said: "Going forward, there might be signs of tapering off if the decline in oil prices continues."

Many analysts are expecting that with the softening of the US economy and the slow growth of Asian countries, demand for oil would be lower, resulting in lower crude prices over the medium term.

Ruiz agreed that the uptrend in inflation would continue during the first quarter but would average at 5.9 percent by year's end, lower than the government's own target range of 6.5 to 7.5 percent.

"However, the wild card is still the impeachment trial. If the President is acquitted, the exchange rate might break the P55:$1 level," Ruiz said.

A higher exchange rate, in turn, is seen to translate to higher consumer prices due to higher costs of production and imports as well as the resulting pressure on interest rates.

For this year, the market consensus is that inflation will be higher but still well within the revised 6.5-7.5 percent range projected by the government. The government's projection for 2001 assumes the following: an increase in food prices due to the El Niño drought; oil prices falling to an average of $24 to $27 per barrel in 2001, and a stable foreign exchange at P47 to P49 to a dollar.

Equitable PCI BANK

INVITATION TO BID

The ACQUIRED ASSETS DIVISION of Equitable PCIBank is inviting offers to purchase by the way of sealed bids, in cash and on "as-is-where-is" basis, the following real estate properties:

TCT NO./AREA (in sqms.)/DESCRIPTION	LOCATION	PRICE
I. METRO MANILA		
1) 247229/280 m2/comm'l. vacant lot	Lot 7, Sub-blk. 11, Pres. Quirino cor. Leveriza, Malate, Manila	P 9,800,000
2) 39549-57/1,469.83 m2/res./condo	Sta. Ana Villas, #2215 Pedro Gil., Sta. Ana, Manila	4,545,800 to 4,595,920
3) 68969/61.62 m2/res. condo	3/F Unit 316, Cityland Condominium 8-Sen. Gil Puyat Ave., Makati City	2,156,700
4) 351526/222 m2/res. w/ impvt.	#6 Riverside St. cor. St. Mary Ave., Provident Vil., Bgy. J. dela Peña, Marikina City	3,462,000
5) 9919-R/287 m2/res. w/ impvts.	288 Santolan Road, West Crame, San Juan, Metro Manila	8,994,000
II. PROVINCIAL		
1) 484399-R/450 m2/comm'l. w/ impvts.	Lazalin Blvd., Villa Victoria Subd., San Juan, San Fernando, Pampanga	2,213,300
2) 119154-55/3,464 m2/comm'l. w/ impvts.	Regidor & Lakandula Sts., Bo. Binitayen, Daraga, Albay	22,958,650
3) 49738/6,591 m2/comm'l./ind'l. w/ impvts.	National Road, Bgy. Rawis, Legaspi City	12,295,000
4) 49737/3,205 m2/comm'l. w/ impvts.	Corner Lakandula Drive and Barriada Road, Gogon, Legaspi City	6,260,000
5) 49739-41/3,346 m2/ind'l. w/ impvts.	Aguinaldo St., Baybay Centro, Port Dist., Legaspi City	16,275,125
6) 324633-45/4,042 m2/13 res. lots	Robinsons Highland Subd., (formerly Panorama Homes Subd.) Bo. Buhangin, Davao City	6,063,000
7) T-25112/9,228 m2/res. vacant lot w/ fence & gate	Along Banadero National Highway, Ozamiz City	7,382,400
III. CHATTELS		
Surface Grinders, EDM CNC Machine, Horizontal Band Saw, Drill Grinder, Milling Machine, Grinding Machines, Optical Measurement Inspection System, Air Compressor, Wire Cut CNC Machine	Equitable PCI Bank, EPZA Branch, Rosario, Cavite	9,164,000

Complete description/specifications of the above properties, rules & regulations on the bidding procedures and the prescribed bid forms are available from the following officers:

All Properties & Chattels MS. BERNIE PEÑAFIEL/AVP/LUCHIE M. CASTILLO/AO/MAR M. RIPA/AO/GISELLE P. ESPIRITU/AO/KAREN U. RESARI/AO/TON-TON P. MALABUYO/AO -Tel. Nos. 817-2822/894-1910/840-7644/840-7920

Bidding will be held on Jan. 30, 2001 at 10:00 A.M., 11/F SAM Con. Rm., Equitable PCIBank Tower 1, Makati Ave., Makati City for all items. Bidders deposit equivalent to 10% of the minimum bid price in the form of cash or Manager's/Cashier's check together with the duly accomplished bid form must be enclosed in the sealed bid. All bids will be opened immediately after the deadline for submission of bids. All winning bids are subject to approval by the Bank's approving authority.

Overseas calls before.

9:00 a.m.
KEVIN: Buy our product! It's better! Bye!

SMART IDD now.

9:00 a.m.
KEVIN: Hello Mr. Stanley! Our product is better than the competition.

9:45 a.m.
KEVIN: It's just what the market wants.

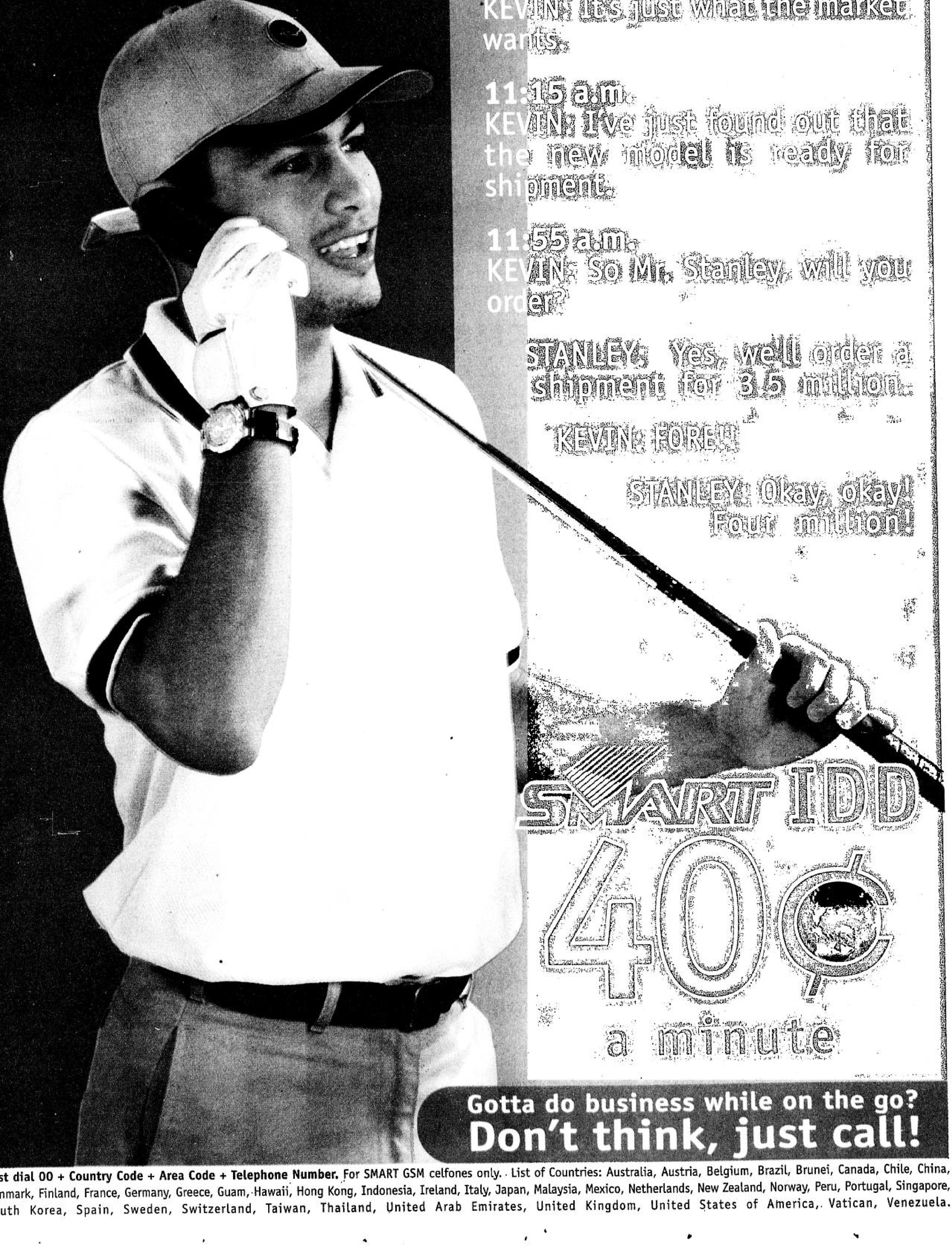
11:15 a.m.
KEVIN: I've just found out that the new model is ready for shipment.

11:55 a.m.
KEVIN: So Mr. Stanley, will you order?

STANLEY: Yes, we'll order a shipment for 3.5 million.

KEVIN: FORE!!

STANLEY: Okay, okay! Four million!



SMART IDD
40¢
a minute

Gotta do business while on the go?
Don't think, just call!

Just dial 00 + Country Code + Area Code + Telephone Number. For SMART GSM celfones only. List of Countries: Australia, Austria, Belgium, Brazil, Brunei, Canada, Chile, China, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Guam, Hawaii, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Malaysia, Mexico, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Peru, Portugal, Singapore, South Korea, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Taiwan, Thailand, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom, United States of America, Vatican, Venezuela.

Ruffled feathers abound over Fed's decision to drop rates

NEW YORK—Alan Greenspan, the revered chair of the US Federal Reserve, is enduring some of the harshest criticism directed at him in his 13-year tenure after a,surprise decision to cut short-term interest rates.

Some chastised the Fed chair for a too little, too late response Wednesday to the impending US recession when he cut the key federal funds rate by a half-point to 6 percent. Still others said he was too focused on stock market profits.

"I think this runs the risk of being a real disaster because it looks like they've been pre-emptive to prevent a recession when the data was very preliminary and when the inflation signals are going all the wrong way," said Anil Kashyap, an economics professor at the University of Chicago.

According to Kashyap, a former Fed economist, the risks of inflation remain paramount in the United States, sending energy costs skyrocketing. Lower interest rates, in this context, merely add fuel to the fire and transform slightly skidding prices into a long-term phenomenon.

"Who has ever heard of a sharp recession or something that we'd really call a disaster when the unemployment rate is 4 percent?" Kashyap asked. "I think this excessive attention to what's going on in the stock markets has been extremely counterproductive."

Kashyap's views that the Fed and its 74-year-old president tailored their actions too closely to the ups and downs of the stock market were echoed Thursday in the Lex Column of the Financial Times.

"By showing investors he (Greenspan) will rescue them come what may, he is encouraging excessive risk-taking and the formation of future bubbles," wrote the anonymous column religiously followed by entrepreneurs worldwide. "Investors should ask themselves whether in fostering such a classic moral hazard the Fed is really being their friend."

In Thursday's Washington Post, another former Fed member, Princeton University professor Alan Blinder, decried Greenspan's decision as being too little, too late.

Wednesday's move was a "tacit admission by the Fed that they had kept rates too high for too long," Blinder said, adding that Greenspan's 1991 decision to keep monetary policy locked down even in face of a tightening economy might have precipitated his decision to cut rates Wednesday.

The 1991 decision "was the only blemish on the Greenspan record. It's the only thing he looks back on as a mistake, and I'm sure he's anxious not to repeat it," Blinder commented.

Economists with BNP-Paribas were no less harsh in their criticism.

"Fifty points down—not even enough to reverse the tendencies of this economy," they wrote, judging the Fed's first error was boosting rates by the same half-point last May.

In keeping interest rates at an inflated level for several months, the Fed wanted to keep at bay an inflation that was not a threat in the first place, said analyst Marc Miles in Thursday's Wall Street Journal.

"The Fed has already stolen the Christmas season of 2000," he wrote in an editorial. "Let's hope they'll drop rates far and fast so they won't spoil Christmas 2001 too." *AFP*

NASDAQ employee Paul Patrick (center) checks stock prices at the Nasdaq Marketsite in New York's Times Square. Feeling upbeat a day after the Federal Reserve's unexpected rate cut, Wall Street sent stocks modestly higher. AP

NEC planning to sell 8 overseas plants

TOKYO—NEC Corp., Japan's second-biggest chipmaker, said yesterday it planned to sell some overseas assembly operations within two years to focus on developing technology for communications equipment and chips.

NEC has majority stakes in eight of 20 overseas factories that make network equipment and mobile phone handsets. The company might sell "some or all of the eight plants in two years," NEC spokeswoman Akiko Shikimori said.

NEC, which plans to offer shares on the New York Stock Exchange this year, aims to cut costs and focus on technology development. The Tokyo-based company has recently sold assets, including its headquarters building and overseas plants. Last month, NEC sold a UK handset plant to Canada's Celestica Inc.

"It's a bold decision, and I praise NEC for it," said Yoshihide Ohtake, an analyst with Tsubasa Research Institute Ltd., who rates the shares "outperform."

"NEC basically warned its plants that (NEC) will get rid of them if they are not contributing enough."

The eight overseas plants NEC may sell include two in Mexico and one each in Argentina, Portugal, the Philippines, Thailand, Vietnam and Austria.

The company plans to turn 13 Japanese subsidiaries that make computers and communication equipment into contractors for other brands within five years, Shikimori said, adding NEC will keep its domestic and overseas chip plants.

NEC shares rose as much as 2.6 percent to 2,175 yen, and were last at 2,165.

Selling assets will help the company focus on its chip business, where NEC will invest 217 billion yen ($1.86 billion), or 62 percent of total capital expenditures in the year through March 2001.

The company expects group net income to rise more than eightfold to 90 billion yen in the year ending March 31, from 10.4 billion yen a year earlier because of brisk sales of microchips used in mobile phones, digital cameras and other digital appliances.

NEC is joined by other Japanese electronics makers that have sold factories to cut costs and refocus operations. Sony Corp. sold its two plants in Japan and Taiwan to Solectron Corp., the world's biggest maker of electronics for other companies. The factories will continue to make lithium ion batteries, car navigation and car audio equipment for Sony. *Bloomberg*

PC titans betting on home electronics

SAN FRANCISCO—With sales of computers dropping to new lows, the world's largest computer companies are hoping smaller electronic devices will shore up sagging bottom lines.

To bring home that point, Intel' chief executive Craig Barrett and Microsoft chair Bill Gates are among the keynote speakers at this weekend's giant Consumer Electronics Show, which starts Saturday in Las Vegas, Nevada.

Top executives from America Online Inc. and Palm Inc., the handheld computer market leader, are also speaking at the convention, where 100,000 are expected.

Their appearances signal a serious move by the computer industry to encroach on the consumer electronics market, a sector that remains robust compared to the computer market.

According to PC Data, a market research firm in Reston, Virginia, December retail sales of personal computers fell 24 percent from December 1999.

By contrast, sales of portable audio components jumped 16 percent in the first 10 months of 2000 from the same period the year before, says the Consumer Electronics Association, the trade group staging this weekend's convention.

"The profit margins for computers is shrinking," said Ron Goldberg, a senior vice president of etown.com, an electronics trade data website. "And consumer electronics offer a place for them to expand."

The move makes sense, says PJ McNealy, a senior analyst with Gartner, another technology research firm.

"Computer companies look in-house and see this expertise in software or memory chips," said McNealy. "Then they look outward to see what markets they can exploit with that expertise. Consumer electronics turns out to be the natural answer."

Intel will be pushing its new digital audio player and a range of home computer add-ons, like a wireless keyboard and mouse and children's computer toys, in Las Vegas this weekend.

Microsoft will be promoting its upcoming Xbox computer gaming machine, as well as its "Ultimate TV" category of gadgets that add computer functions like e-mail and Web surfing to the home television.

As computer makers move into the electronics market, the reverse trend is also underway. Insiders say that Sony will unwrap its eVilla machine—an Internet device which can download and run video and audio clips—at CES this weekend.

Other anticipated CES highlights:

AOL is going to release more details on its AOL Mobile Communicator, a hand-held pager-with-keyboard device that allows users to access their AOL email and chat functions remotely. *AFP*

PCCW to pay more interest on loan

HONG KONG—Pacific Century CyberWorks Ltd. increased yesterday the interest rate it would pay on a $4.7-billion loan after banks balked at loaning money to a company whose shares lost almost three-quarters of their value last year.

CyberWorks would pay between 85 basis points and 145 basis points more than the London interbank offered rate, said Bank of China, JP Morgan Chase & Co., HSBC Holdings Plc, Mizuho Holdings Inc. and Barclays Plc, which were arranging the loan. That was up from between 50 and 80 basis points above Libor in November.

The five banks arranging the CyberWorks loan said in a statement that the increase would "assist the successful and early closing of the syndication of the loan." Barclay's head of loans in Asia, Richard Tang, said Wednesday that another 10 banks might join the group as early as this week.

Finding banks to lend money is a challenge given the demands on the debt market from telephone companies, especially those funding bids for wireless Internet licenses. Last month, British Telecommunications Plc sold $10 billion of bonds, the largest issue ever of dollar-denominated corporate debt.

CyberWorks, run by Richard Li, the son of tycoon Li Ka-shing, slumped last year amid a global skid in telecommunications and Internet stocks. The shares tumbled 72 percent, making it the worst-performing stock on the Hang Seng Index. Its shares fell 1.9 percent today to HK$5.05. *Bloomberg*

DISCLOSURES

CENTRAL Azucarera de Tarlac will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on Jan 30, 4 p.m., at the Alto Pavilion, San Miguel Tarlac.

***

MARSTEEL Consolidated Inc. said that it was not aware of any material information that might have caused the 45.45-percent increase in its share price.

***

PHILIPPINE Bank of Communications said the payment period for its 1:1 stock rights offering would be from Jan. 15 to Jan. 19.

***

GUOCO Holdings (Philippines) Inc. failed to submit its annual report using SEC Form 11-A for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2000. In view of [illegible] change is considering the suspension of trading of the company's [illegible] Jan.15 unless compliance is made on or before this date.

***

UNIWIDE Holdings Inc. said it was not aware of any material information that might have affected the value and trading of its securities aside from the matters it disclosed on Jan. 3 regarding **Casino Guichard Perrachon's** decision not to extend the memorandum of agreement signed in February last year. *Compiled by Armin P. Adina, PDI Research*

Korean investors bet there's gold in Africa

SEOUL—Korean stock investors are taking a shine to gold—or at least to companies that claim to have found it.

First there was Dong-Ah Construction Co., whose shares surged by their daily limit for 17 days after reports it stumbled upon evidence of a sunken Russian warship laden with gold.

Now comes another lucky prospector, Hyundai Corp. Its shares surged by their 15-percent limit for a second day yesterday after the company claimed it struck gold in the West African nation of Mali.

Just how much of the precious metal was open to question. Yonhap News reported speculation of a deposit as large as 300,000 tons. That would be more than twice all the gold ever dug out of the earth.

"We cannot comment on the exact amount," said Lee Hong Jae, a Hyundai Corp. spokesman. "We have yet to finish our preliminary studies."

Such vague talk failed to cool enthusiasm for the trading arm of Hyundai Group, a once-powerful Korean conglomerate that was now scrambling to sell assets to bail out its ailing construction unit. Hyundai Corp. jumped to 1,525 won yesterday.

Gyrating stocks are not rare in Korea, whose benchmark stock index is among the most volatile in the world after the Russian-Trading System. And for the past month, it has been gold that has helped some nervy investors forget that the Kospi index lost half its value in the past year. *Bloomberg*

Philippine Stock Exchange

(As of Friday, January 5, 2001)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES					
BANKS					
Asiatrust Dev. Bank Inc.	7.40	7.4	7.4	7.4	6,000
Bank of the Phil. Islands	57.50	58	57.5	58	64,500
China Banking Corp.	750.0	750	750	750	12,200
Chinatrust Comm. Bank	18.00	18	18	18	500
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	54.00	54	53	53.5	19,100
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	184.0	185	183	184	161,130
Philippine National Bank	38.50	38.5	37	37	44,600
Phil. Savings Bank	30.00	30	30	30	4,400
Union Bank of the Phil.	31.50	32	31.5	32	48,300
FINANCIAL SERVICE					
Bankard Inc.	1.54	1.54	1.5	1.5	171,000
Manulife Financial Corp.	1375	1380	1370	1375	3,830
PCI Leasing & Fin. Inc.	1.18	1.18	1.18	1.18	30,000
Sun Life Financial Serv.	1220	1250	1190	1220	19,290
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL					
COMMUNICATION					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	49.00	49.5	49	49.5	68,500
Diversified Fin. Network	9.00	9.3	7.7	9.3	5,000
Digital Telecom Phils. Inc.	.4500	.45	.43	.43	480,000
Liberty Telecoms Holdings	.4500	.45	.44	.45	420,000
Manila Bulletin Pub. Corp.	4.00	4	4	4	75,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	875.0	880	870	870	71,150
Philweb.com Inc.	.0360	.037	.034	.034	66,200,000
POWER & ENERGY					
Manila Electric Co. "A"	45.00	46	45	46	39,300
Manila Electric Co. "B"	48.50	48.5	47.5	48	444,100
Petron Corp.	1.20	1.2	1.16	1.2	1,849,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Int'l Container Term'l SV	.7300	.73	.73	.73	50,000
Keppel Phils. Marine Inc.	.4400	.57	.44	.57	390,000
CONSTRUCTION & OTHER RELATED PRODUCTS					
Alsons Cement Corp.	.1750	.175	.175	.175	1,070,000
Republic Cement Corp.	.3300	.33	.33	.33	80,000
Republic Glass Hldg. Corp.	.7100	.71	.71	.71	30,000
FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO					
Alaska Milk Corp.	2.00	2	2	2	2,000
Jollibee Foods Corp.	9.70	9.7	9.6	9.6	60,000
La Tondeña Distillers Inc.	30.50	30.5	30	30.5	39,000
Pancake House Inc.	1.60	1.6	1.6	1.6	50,000
San Miguel Corp. "A"	48.50	50	48	50	86,600
San Miguel Corp. "B"	53.50	54.5	53.5	54.5	43,700
HOLDING FIRMS					
Ayala Corp.	7.30	7.3	7.3	7.3	431,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	1.32	1.32	1.32	1.32	1,000
Alliance Global Group Inc.	12.25	12.25	11.5	12	1,800
Ajo.Net Holdings Inc.	.8100	.81	.81	.81	80,000
APC Group Inc.	.1800	.18	.18	.18	300,000
Anglo Phil. Holdings Corp.	.4000	.4	.4	.4	20,000
ATN Holdings Inc.	2.12	2.18	2.12	2.18	17,000
Baguio Gold Holdings Corp.	2.00	2	2	2	10,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	2.90	2.9	2.85	2.85	3,005,000
Crown Equities Inc.	.2700	.27	.27	.27	300,000
Southeast Asian Cement	.2000	.21	.2	.21	200,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.	.2700	.27	.27	.27	340,000
Ebecom Holdings Inc.	.0850	.085	.085	.085	400,000
Ever-Gotesco Resources	.0460	.046	.046	.046	1,000,000
First Phil. Hldgs. Corp.	20.50	20.5	20.5	20.5	15,200
Global Equities Inc.	.3300	.33	.33	.33	200,000
Ionics Inc.	14.50	14.5	14.5	14.5	378,700
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc.	2.04	2.06	2.02	2.02	55,000
Macroasia Corp.	2.10	2.1	2.1	2.1	35,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	.5800	.58	.58	.58	3,420,000
Solid Group Inc.	.4800	.48	.43	.43	1,250,000
Uniwide Holdings Inc.	.3400	.35	.29	.29	57,080,000
MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING					
Macondray Plastics Inc.	6.40	6.4	6.2	6.2	57,000
Music Corp.	2.90	2.9	2.9	2.9	2,000
Mabuhay Vinyl Corp.	.5400	.54	.54	.54	200,000
Philippine Seven Corp.	6.90	7	6.9	7	51,000
SPI Technologies Inc.	7.80	7.8	7.8	7.8	13,000
HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICE					
Belle Corp.	.6400	.64	.64	.64	360,000
Fairmont Holdings Inc.	.7500	.77	.75	.76	1,640,000
Leisure & Resorts Corp.	.3900	.39	.39	.39	520,000
BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp. (PDR)	49.50	50	49.5	50	369,600
DMCI Holdings Inc.-Pref.	560.0	560	560	560	100
Equitable PCI Bank-War	2.90	2.9	2.85	2.9	302,000
Globe Telecom Hldg. (PDR)	675.0	690	675	690	8,750
Omico Corp. Warrant	.0026	.0026	.0026	.0026	10,000,000
PLDT (10% Pref) Series Q	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	300
PLDT (10% Pref) Series W	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	1,400
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	5.40	5.4	5.3	5.4	4,638,000
Araneta Properties Inc.	.3000	.3	.3	.3	100,000
Cebu Holdings Inc.	.4000	.4	.4	.4	10,000
C & P Homes Inc.	.1850	.185	.185	.185	300,000
Empire East Land Inc.	.3100	.32	.3	.32	16,140,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	1.32	1.34	1.32	1.34	3,493,000
Keppel Phils. Prop. Inc.	1.00	1	.8	1	332,000
Fil-Estate Land Inc.	.3000	.32	.3	.32	270,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	5.50	5.6	5.5	5.6	3,650,000
MINING					
Apex Mining Co. Inc. "B"	.0048	.0048	.0048	.0048	2,000,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co. "A"	.1900	.19	.19	.19	30,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co. "B"	.2000	.2	.2	.2	70,000
Manila Mining Corp. "A"	.0060	.006	.006	.006	37,000,000
Manila Mining Corp. "B"	.0060	.006	.006	.006	2,000,000
Philex Mining Corp. "A"	.2200	.22	.22	.22	20,000
OIL					
Interport Res.	.0050	.005	.005	.005	5,000,000
Pacifica	.0150	.015	.014	.014	3,000,000
South China Resources Inc.	.3000	.3	.3	.3	80,000
Vulcan Ind'l.	.1900	.19	.19	.19	30,000

	SHARES	VALUE (P)
Banks & Fin Svc	584,850	75,858,790.00
Comm'l & Ind'l	153,618,200	169,496,395.00
PRO	28,933,000	55,491,820.00
Mining	41,120,000	267,700.00
OIL	8,110,000	97,700.00
GRAND TOTALS:	232,366,050	301,212,405.00
	AVERAGES	
Banks & Fin Svc	542.27	DOWN 3.50
Comm'l & Ind'l	2,076.08	DOWN 4.69
PRO	497.86	UP0.65
Mining	1,227.15	DOWN 3.93
OIL	1.71	UNCH 0.00
All Shares Index	790.23	DOWN27.47
Composite	1,469.08	DOWN 6.03

NO. OF ADVANCES: 19; NO. OF DECLINES: 34; NO. OF UNCHANGED: 37; NO. OF TRADED ISSUES: 90; NO. OF TRADES: 1,855

CURRENCIES

Jan. 05, 2001

Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Foreign currency in US$	Foreign currency in Peso
United States	Dollar	1.052964	1.000000	50.9530
Japan	Yen	0.009103	0.008645	0.4405
United Kingdom	Pound	1.581552	1.502000	76.5314
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.135001	0.128210	6.5327
Switzerland	Franc	0.655807	0.622820	31.7345
Canada	Dollar	0.702726	0.667379	34.0050
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Interview on
Jan 12-13, 2001

For Mindanao
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#8 Block 13
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Republic of the Philippines
Department of Finance
BUREAU OF CUSTOMS
Collection District III
Ninoy Aquino International Airport

1st NOTICE

In the forthcoming public auction sale of a forfeited shipment consisting of rare and expensive assorted pieces of jewelry of considerable quantity and value, the Bureau of Customs needs the assistance of a firm, entity, or organization to act as its CONSULTANT to provide the requisite knowledge and expertise on:

1.. Gem, precious stone, and jewelry appraisal
2. Cataloguing and publication
3. Advertisement and promotion of the activity designed to attract foreign/international buyers
4. Preparation for, and actual conduct of, the auction sale proper
5. Release and delivery of items/articles sold, including, but not limited to, the following:
   a. Inspection
   b. Inventory taking prior to delivery
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Interested parties are invited to write and present their proposals and CREDENTIALS to Atty. TOMAS ALCID/Atty. TEODORO CINCO, Office of the Deputy Collector for Operations, Room 101 Ground Floor, NAIA Customs Building, Old MIA Road, Pasay City (in front of Mercure Hotel) on or before January 18, 2001.

The Bureau of Customs reserves the right to reject any or all proposals without giving any reason, waive any formality, and enter into an agreement with the party whose proposal as evaluated by the PBAC, is the most advantageous to the Government.

(Note: Consultancy fee matters, allowed within the limits provided for by the Tariff and Customs Code of the Philippines, will be discussed and negotiated after qualification.)

(Sgd.) **CELSO P. TEMPLO**
District Collector

(PDI – Jan 6 2001)

INQUIRER TRIVIA

By BONG BARRAMEDA

3 Wise Men

Q. Were there really only 'Three Wise Men'?

A. The Bible does not mention the number of wise men, but refers only to the 'wise men from the east.' Western religions have placed the number at three, probably since the gifts included three types of treasure: 'gold, and frankincense, and myrrh.' Even the names now attribute to them—Gaspar, Melchior, and Balthasar—appeared only in the sixth century and are nowhere to be found in the Bible. There could have been many wise men and many gifts.

Popular notion has it that the Three Wise Men appeared at the manger the night Jesus Christ was born. This has no biblical support. What the Bible says is that only the shepherds came to the manger that night—the wise men visited the 'house of the child,' not the manger. And even the time their visit is the subject of scholarly debate, and varies from twelve days to more than a year after the birth of Jesus.

Quote in the Act. *"When in Rome, do as the Romans do."* In 387 A.D. when St. Augustine arrived in Milan, he observed that the Church did not fast as did the Church in Rome. So he consulted St. Ambrose, bishop of Milan, who replied: "When I am in Rome, I fast on a Saturday; when I am in Milan, I do not. Follow the custom of the Church where you are." This statement eventually became "When in Rome, do as the Romans do."

Past Forward. This day in 1919: A 31-year old German soldier named Adolf Hitler founded the National Socialist German Workers' Party. About a year later, he left the army to devote his full attention to the growth of this, the Nazi party, which would rule Germany from 1933 to 1945.

WORD WATCH

Blitz (blits) : a swift destructive attack of overwhelming power, from the German *blitzkrieg*, 'lightning war.'

PDI – January 6, 2001

BACKUP GUARANTY FOR PAG-IBIG
The SHDA Guaranty Fund, Inc. (SGFI) has entered into an agreement with the Home Development Mutual Fund (HDMF) to reinforce the guaranty protection to HDMF against non-payment of housing loans. Sealing the signing of the agreement with a handshake are HDMF president Ramon P. Palma Gil and SGFI president Jose S. de Guzman. Witnessing the signing are (from left) HDMF SVP Tess Gonzales, HUDCC deputy secretary general Lucille Ortile; HDMF VPs Rafael Odes Abaño III, Lillian Reyes and Yolanda Akol; SGFI officers Willie Uy, Guillermo Choa and Marcelino Mendoza; SGFI chair Mariano Martinez Jr.; and SGFI treasurer Noel Gonzales.

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OBITUARIES

Mency Apostol Libranda

Died in the Grace of our Lord on January 5, 2001 at the age of 59.

Her bereaved husband **Don** and son **Richard**; her parents **Dr.** and **Mrs. Felizardo S. Apostol**; brothers **Mandy, Dodoy, Ambel, Andy, Gus** and sisters **Cynthia, Chit, Celeste** and **Cecile** request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her body lies in state at the Christ the King Church (St. Joseph Chapel), Green Meadows, Quezon City.

Interment will be announced later.

AGNES R. ISAAC

Went home to be with the Lord on January 5, 2001 at the age of 54.

Her mother **Amelia**; sister **Jazmine**; brothers **Elmer** and **Ulysses**; in-laws, nephews, nieces, relatives and friends will surely miss her but rejoice that she is now with our Creator.

Her remains lie in state at the Paradise Village Chapel, Project 8, Quezon City.

Interment will be on January 7, 2001 at the Loyola Memorial Park in Marikina.

Conrado C. Salonga, D.M.D., F.I.C.D.

August 16, 1930 - January 4, 2001

His loving children **Johnny & Lory, Gerry & Rizza**, and **Millette**; together with his sisters, brother and his grandchildren, relatives and friends request everyone to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at the Chapel along Araneta Avenue, Funeraria Paz.

Interment will be announced later.

EARROL C. SEÑO

ChE; MBA Candidate
Staff Engineer
SMPP-Manila Glass Plant
San Miguel Corp.

Died in the Grace of our Lord on January 04, 2001 at the age of 28.

His bereaved parents **Teddy & Pearl**; sisters **Earleen, Elaine & Eleanor**; brother **Earl**; brother-in-law **John Harold N. Ong**; sister-in-law **Dinah C. Rosal**; fiancee **Belle M. Melecio**; niece **Arielle**; nephew **Arby**; other relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at the Holy Trinity Memorial Chapels, along Sucat Road, Parañaque City.

Interment will be on Sunday, January 07, 2001 at the Loyola Memorial Park, Sucat Road, Parañaque City, after the 2:00 p.m. Mass.

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Armenia Querijero Warren

Has joined her husband "Tito" and peacefully rests in the infinite warmth and embrace of our Lord on January 4, 2001 at the age of 55.

Her loving children **Jojo, John and Jane**; grandchild **Alyssa, Tatay, Nanay, Dan, Tita, Au and Liling**; her relatives and friends request for prayers for her eternal happiness.

Her mortal remains lie in state at the Loyola Memorial Chapels, Makati City.

Cremation will be on Tuesday, January 9, 2001, 8:00 a.m. at the Loyola Chapels Crematorium.

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>
> *2 Cor. 4:14*

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Speaker Arnulfo P. Fuentebella

and the

Members of the House of Representative

mourn with deep sorrow the passing away of a distinguished colleague

Honorable Hilarion J. Ramiro, Jr.

Congressman, 2nd District, Misamis Occidental
1987 - 1995, 1998-2001

who joined his Creator on Friday, January 5, 2001 at the age of 62.

His body lies in state at the Mt. Carmel Church, New Manila, Quezon City, and will be flown to the family residence in Juan Luna Street, Ozamiz City, Misamis Occidental, at 10:00 a.m. on Sunday, January 7, 2001.

Interment will be on Thursday, 11 January 2001, at the Aguada Cemetery, Ozamiz City.

We request pious readers to offer prayers for the eternal repose of his soul.

In lieu of flowers, donations to the
Hilarion "Nonoy" Ramiro, Jr. Foundation, Inc.,
No. 3 Sunset Street, Magdalena Rolling Hills, New Manila, Quezon City,
or Juan Luna Street, Ozamiz City, Misamis Occidental
will be most appreciated.

I am
the way,
the truth
and
the life.
No one
comes
to the
Father
except
through
Me.
John 14:6

R.I.P.

REPRESENTATIVE HILARION (NONOY) RAMIRO, JR.

of Second District, Misamis Occidental

Died in the Grace of our Lord on January 5, 2001
at the age of 62.

His loving wife **Hermie**; and son **Gerard**; sisters **Baby** and **Conrad**, **Mae** and **Ramon**, **Tita**, **Mary Lou**, **Remy** and **Bebot**; relatives and friends request for prayers for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at Mount Carmel Church, Doña Juana Rodriguez Avenue, New Manila, and will be flown to Ozamiz City on January 7, 2001.

Interment will be scheduled at a later date.

In lieu of flowers, a donation to the Hilarion (Nonoy) Ramiro, Jr. Foundation will be appreciated. Please send to: No. 3 Sunrise Hill Street, New Manila Rolling Hills, New Manila, Quezon City or Ozamiz City.

CARMEN "MAMITA" VERZOLA FLORES

(July 11, 1910 — January 2, 2001)
of Cuyapo, Nueva Ecija

Peacefully joined our Lord on January 2, 2001 at the age of 90.

Her loving husband **Aurelio** (deceased); children **Mina** and **Carding** (deceased), **Ely** and **Lino**, **Beng** and **Ronnie**, **Boy** and **Baby**, **Etang** and **Nil**, **Amang** and **Cristy**, **Emy** and **Felix**, **Rene** and **Jerry**, **Nene** and **Rading**; grandchildren, relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her remains lie in Cuyapo, Nueva Ecija.

Interment will be on Tuesday, January 9, 2001 at the Cuyapo Cemetery at 2 PM.

We design **OBITUARIES** for free.

ROMULO D. COLOMA

Former Professor and Dean,
National University College of Engineering
Former Vice-President, Technosphere Consultants Group, Inc.
Former Director, National Irrigation Administration

Passed away in the Grace of our Lord on January 4, 2001
at the age of 75 to be reunited with his late beloved wife
Angelita Zaballero Coloma.

Romy's children **Bobby** and **Debbie**, **Willie** and **Jenny**, and **Joji**; grandchildren **Carlo**, **Angela Christa** and **Angelo Romulo** request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at Nacional Memorial Homes, Chapel 3-C, 264 G. Araneta Avenue, Quezon City.

Interment will be on Sunday, January 7, 2001 at the Himlayang Pilipino Memorial Park, Tandang Sora, Quezon City after an 8:00 a.m. Mass at the Nacional Memorial Homes.

"...absent
with the
body
to be
present
with the
Lord."
John 14:6

THANK YOU

From the bereaved wife, children, grandchildren,
sister, brother, relatives and friends of the late

JUDGE MANUEL E. YUZON (Ret.)

of Piddig, Ilocos Norte and Makati City

CESAR D. MANGAWANG, Editor ■ STELLA GONZALES, Assistant Editor

Travel to the stars, reality in 21st century

ENJOY YOUR FLIGHT!

TOKYO—Buckle up for the ride of your lifetime: space tourism is set to leap out of the pages of science fiction and take off in the coming years if a clutch of Japanese companies have their way.

"Space flight, which had just been an idle dream for mankind, became a routine job for astronauts in the 20th century," says Kohki Isozaki, head of space tourism promotion at the Japanese Rocket Society.

"And this will become your reality in the 21st century," he predicted.

The ticket to the stars won't be cheap—but it would be significantly less than the $20 million stumped up by 59-year-old US businessman Dennis Tito for a trip to the Russian space station Mir.

Target date

With Tito's trip now in doubt as the elderly Mir threatens to fall to Earth before its scheduled destruction date of February, the world may have to wait until 2016 before seeing the first space tourists go up.

That is the target date set by the Japanese Rocket Society, a private body which plans to set up a joint venture to develop a 71.6-billion-yen ($628 million) reusable rocket called "Kanko-Maru," or tourism ship.

With backing from some heavyweight Japanese industrial names, including Mitsubishi Heavy Industries Ltd., Fujitsu Ltd., Sharp Corp. and Nissan Motor Co. Ltd., the society plans to build a prototype rocket in 2004.

It aims to develop 52 spaceships in total, containing a circular cabin to give everyone a view, and complete 1,200 test flights by 2015.

"We have finished the research phase," Isozaki said. "We are encouraging airlines to take an interest in the project and eventually to invest their money.

"We are also planning to ask the government to sponsor the launch of a demonstration flight planned for 2006."

Each tourist going up on the 50-seat vessel would pay three million yen ($26,000 dollars), a hefty amount but one that many may be willing to cough up.

More than 70 percent of Japanese would be happy to pay up to three months' income for a space trip, according to a 1993 survey of 3,030 people conducted by Azabu University, west of Tokyo.

While the US businessman has been undergoing intensive space training for his Mir trip, the Kanko-Maru passengers would merely have to turn up and check in.

"You will not need to have any prior training," said Isozaki. "It would be just like an airplane where you can wear casual clothes."

Like an airplane

But prospective tourists going up for a three-hour orbit may think twice when they glance at Japan's record so far in space.

The country started its space development program in 1969 and has launched more than 30 rockets. But the program has been blighted by a series of embarrassing failures.

Last November, the National Space Development Agency of Japan was forced to explode a H-2 rocket and satellite by remote control when it veered off course after lift-off.

The consolation was that it was unmanned.

"Our country certainly lacks knowledge of manned flight technology," said Yoshifumi Inatani, an associate professor at Japan's Institute of Space and Astronautical Science.

"Needless to say, technological data on manned flights will be a pre-requisite for taking passengers into space. If we transport ordinary people, many new problems may emerge," he said.

"The biggest problem will be how to ensure passengers' safety."

Companies backing the project acknowledge the difficulties.

"There are still technical problems, such as how the engine can really be reusable and how lighter spaceships can be built," said Hiroyuki Torii, a spokesman for Kawasaki Heavy Industries' space and commercial plane division. *AFP*

Artificial intelligence research in RP on the rise

BY QUEENA N. LEE-CHUA

ARTIFICIAL intelligence (AI) research has been steadily increasing in the country in the past few years. D. Magcamit [magcamit@rc-ynb.com] wants to know more about the local situation:

You had an interesting topic on AI networks in the Oct. 21, 2000 issue. My MS thesis was also on AI, but in genetic algorithms. One question came to my mind—most probably because I have not been practicing now what I had learned before. My question is: what is the current condition of our country in terms of AI applications? I know my question is a broad one, hence, I think if you can limit it to the academic sector, it would be enough for me. However, if you can include the industrial/business sector, so much the better.

Thank you. Your articles are really stimulating The Filipino people really have to strive to learn more on science and math rather than waste their time thinking of how to win bingo or *jueteng* games.

Your question gave me food for thought, and I decided to enlist the help of Ma. Mercedes Tan-Rodrigo of the Ateneo Computer Science Department, who has done research on neural networks. Here is her reply:

"I went over the proceedings of the Philippine Computing Science Congress last November and corresponded with several professors from Ateneo, UP and De La Salle. First, the Ateneo Department of Information Systems and Computer Sciences has very limited AI research. We have done some work on Intelligent Tutoring Systems, which are educational programs that provide learners with coaching, intelligent feedback and guidance through the subject matter, quizzes and exercises. Over the last five years, we graduate students have developed systems for elementary math and graduate school accounting. Although there were prospects to launch these products commercially, I'm sorry to say they never panned out.

"Second, the De La Salle University faculty and students are also very interested in these intelligent systems. During the congress, at least two groups presented papers on this research—Rhodora Reyes' group created one for teaching context-free grammars, and Teresita Limoanco and Dr. Raymond Sison produced another with a pedagogical agent to support collaborative learning. De La Salle also has ongoing projects in artificial neural networks, image processing and robotics. Ma. Liza Minerva Bautista, Percival Jordan Canlas, Ma. Ana Mendoza and Robert Ramos developed a visual information retrieval system. Given a database of pictures or graphics, their retrieval system locates images based on pixel values, histograms, color regions, and textures instead of keywords. The group of Elmer Dadios of the Department of Manufacturing Engineering and Management developed an automated fish-sorting system. A controller with a mounted camera captures the images of fish loaded on a dynamic conveyor. Image processing software determines whether each fish is small, medium, or large. The controller directs the conveyor to drop the fish into the appropriate bin.

"Third, UP Diliman also has numerous AI undertakings. The students and faculty seem to be particularly interested in computer vision, speech recognition, machine translation and natural language synthesis and understanding. One example of a computer vision project was presented during the congress by Maru M. Velas, Gerardo E. Domingo II, Enrico I. Pangan and Erickson T. Miranda of the Department of Computer Science. They developed a method for locating and recognizing traffic signals from images taken by a video camera mounted on a vehicle. As for language understanding, Ethel Joy Marie R. Asio's group has done some work with natural language synthesis. Their system accepts Filipino text as input and outputs natural sounding speech. An ambitious project by Hannah Martha C. Abella, Josephine P. Ganigan, Emelita D. Mendoza, and Gezelle Frances Y. Rivera is a machine translator that can convert Filipino sentences to English.

"In the realm of music, an interesting project by Marc Oliver R. Castaneda's group attempts to reverse-engineer music. Given a digitized piano music recording, their system derives the musical notes, producing the score. The group of Angela Nicolas Amores, on the other hand, attempts the exact opposite: their system accepts a machine-printed musical score and converts it into a Musical Instrument Digital Interface. This file can then be played or edited. At least two groups in UP are looking into hand-gesture recognition. Alan T. Ting's group looked into the recognition of American Sign Language, while Eunice D. Amutan's group designed and implemented a visually based hand gesture recognition system to manipulate onscreen images. The user can move or rotate objects on screen by simply moving or rotating his hand."

More information about AI research at UP Diliman is available at the CS 198 (Special Projects) website http://222.engg.upd.edu.ph/~naval/cs198/cs198.html and at the Computer Vision and Machine Intelligence Group Website http://www.emgg.upd.edu.ph/~cvmig.

Ms Rodrigo wishes to thank Profs. Jaime D. L. Caro and Pros C. Naval of UP, Prof. Raymond C. Sison of De La Salle, and Prof. John Paul Vergara of Ateneo for their assistance.

* * *

Send your queries to me c/o Ateneo de Manila University, Math Department, Loyola Heights, Quezon City. Or e-mail me at: queena@mathsci.math.admu.edu.ph.

The case of the high-risk pregnancy

BY RAFAEL R. CASTILLO
MD, FPCP, FPCC, MBA

Lorna is a 27-year-old accounting clerk in a small firm who consulted her family physician to ask if she could safely have a pregnancy.

The eldest of six children, she was diagnosed to have rheumatic fever at age 13 when she was in her final year in a public elementary school. Her parents supported the brood by working in a shoe factory. They lived in the slums of Marikina and their environmental sanitation at home was far from ideal.

Lorna and her siblings had frequent respiratory ailments and it was not uncommon for them to have on-and-off fever and sore throat. One time though, her cough and sore throat presented differently. Two weeks after, she started to complain of migratory joint pains and swelling. It started first from the right knee joint, then the left elbow, followed by the left knee joint. As the swelling in one joint resolved, the swelling in the other joints would appear.

She also had shortness of breath and had difficulty breathing specially when lying down. Initially, her parents gave her antipyretics and some painkillers. Lorna's symptoms however got worse, prompting her parents to bring her to the local health center.

Enlargement of the heart

The health center physician made a diagnosis of rheumatic fever with complications in the heart valves causing swelling or enlargement with heart failure.

"Your daughter's case is a little complicated and it is not advisable to manage her as an out-patient. I'll refer her to a tertiary public hospital for admission," the doctor said.

Lorna stayed for 10 days in the hospital where she was managed as a case of congestive heart failure secondary to rheumatic fever with swelling of the heart muscles and valves called carditis. The cardiologist who attended to her explained to Lorna and her parents what her disease was all about.

"It starts as a harmless-looking sore throat which is caused by a specific bacteria called Group A beta hemolytic Streptococcus, which subsequently causes an auto-immune reaction making some organs of the body react to inflammation and destruction. The heart is the organ most commonly affected by this auto-immune reaction."

"But how did she get this bacteria?" Lorna's parents asked.

The cause

"Poor environmental sanitation is the most common culprit," the doctor answered.

Lorna remarkably improved during her confinement and she was discharged almost asymptomatic except for some weakness. "Thank God you came just in time before you developed severe heart failure," Lorna's physician told her. "But our problem is not over yet. This can recur and have exacerbations which can cause irreversible damage to your heart."

MEDICAL FILES

"What should we do to prevent it?" Lorna's parents asked.

"First, you should start working on your home sanitation. Always make sure your surroundings are clean. Second, your daughter needs a penicillin injection every three weeks to prevent the streptococcal infection that generally precedes the disease. Third, she has to have a regular check-up to monitor the progression of her heart condition and determine what medications she needs."

More complications

More due to other pressing needs rather than the lack of concern, Lorna and her parents were not able to adhere strictly to the doctor's instructions.

Lorna herself did not detect the progression of her heart condition that caused the thickening and stiffening of the heart valves that progressively impeded the circulation in the heart. The worsening of her symptoms was too subtle for Lorna to notice. But her classmates noticed her shortness of breath and fast breathing during their PE class, such that her teacher exempted her from the more strenuous activities assigned to the class. From her end, Lorna dismissed her symptoms as the expected sequelae of her rheumatic fever.

Despite the limitation in her activity tolerance, Lorna was able to go through high school and finish a secretarial course. She worked as a clerk in a small firm where she met Pepe, the company's maintenance man.

Almost a year after they first met, Lorna and Pepe got married. They were so deeply in love that they never seriously gave thought to Lorna's medical condition. A concerned co-employee advised them to seek professional advice on the safety of having a pregnancy given Lorna's condition.

Safe pregnancy

Lorna started to be concerned about her condition. She always had this sense of denial that her heart condition was getting worse, and she attributed her worsening symptoms to anything else but her heart condition. She rarely followed up with her physician and her compliance in taking her medications was far from ideal.

Lorna and Pepe decided to seek medical advice. The doctor, upon learning that Lorna was planning to bear a child, did not make any comment but first proceeded with a thorough physical examination. He told her to undergo a heart ultrasound examination called 2-D echocardiogram. Then he explained the results of the exam to the couple.

"The thickening of one of your heart valves which we call Mitral stenosis has become very severe that your blood can hardly pass through the tight mitral orifice, causing a severe obstruction to the circulation of blood in your heart. This causes the blood to dam back to your lungs hence, you're literally drowning in your own blood."

"What we want to know, doctor, is if I can get pregnant or not."

"For your and the baby's sake, NO!" the doctor emphatically answered. "You will be exposing yourself and the baby to a big risk. Too high a risk, it's almost like suicide. We have to fix your heart first."

Fixing the heart, the doctor explained, meant either of two options: Mitral valvuloplasty, which entails inserting a balloon-tipped catheter through the groin to the inner heart valve; or doing surgery to manually split the fused mitral valve or replace it with a prosthesis or an artificial valve.

"If it's any consolation," the heart specialist explained, "your diseased mitral valve appears not too hopelessly thickened and calcified and a balloon valvuloplasty would probably suffice."

It's a girl!

Lorna and Pepe spent a few days discussing the doctor's recommendation. They agreed that before her condition got any worse, she should undergo the procedure. The only problem now was their financial constraint. They informed the doctor about their predicament and he referred Lorna to a charitable foundation that helped subsidize the expenses together with the medical center where it was done.

The procedure was successful and Lorna immediately noticed the improvement in her symptoms. Just a few weeks after, she could already perform some tasks she barely imagined she would ever be able to do. She also got a go-signal from her doctor to become pregnant. When she finally got pregnant after more than a year after, Lorna and her husband felt so happy that their dream to have a child was going to be a reality. Throughout her pregnancy, she was monitored closely by her heart specialist and after 38 weeks of pregnancy, she gave birth by normal delivery to a healthy baby girl.

As Lorna breastfed her baby for the first time, she could not help but cry, and be grateful at the wonderful chance God gave her to become a mother.

(Medical Files is based on the case histories of actual patients Some data have been changed to cover the identity of the patient. Dr Castillo is a past president of the Philippine Heart Association Philippine College of Cardiology Please send comments or questions to Room 601, Medical Arts Center, Manila Doctors Hospital, T.M Kalaw, Ermita, Manila or e-mail rrc@i-manila.com.ph.)

Meet ASIMO, the humanoid robot

A SMALL, lightweight humanoid robot able to walk in a manner closely similar to that of a human being is the latest research product of Honda Motor Co. Ltd.

Named "ASIMO," for Advanced Step in Innovative Mobility, the robot walks smoothly and can operate household switches, reach doorknobs and perform tasks at tables and benches.

Honda's research and development unit began developing in 1986 an autonomous walking robot that could be helpful to humans and be of practical use in society. In 1996, the prototype P2 made its debut, followed by the P3 in 1997.

Asimo is an evolution of the P3 and the range of its arm movement was significantly increased. By putting Asimo's shoulder 20 degrees higher than P3, elbow height was increased to 15 degrees over horizontal, allowing a wider range of work capability. Its range of vertical arm movement has also been increased to 105 degrees.

Compared to P3, Asimo's height was reduced from 160 cm to 120 cm and its weight from 130 kg to 43 kg.

Asimo's Predicted Movement Control that calculates the next move and shifts the center of gravity accordingly was combined with existing walking control know-how to create i-WALK (intelligent real-time flexible walking) technology.

To improve the operation of the robot, flexible walking control and button operation can be carried out either by a workstation or from a handy portable controller.

WALKS like a human

Arthritis convention to be held in Baguio

THE PHILIPPINE Rheumatology Association is holding its 8th annual meeting on Jan.19-20 at the Baguio Country Club with the theme "Arthritis: Basic Facts in Changing Times."

The convention features a wide range of topics including chronic aches and pains, osteoporosis, osteoarthritis, arthritis in children, and the bone and Joint Decade. Slated to speak are Dr. Jaime Galvez-Tan on The Impact of Non-Communicable Diseases in the Community, Dr. Sanford Roth on Future Therapies in Rheumatic Diseases, and Dr. Kenneth Hartigan-Go on Neutriceuticals for Arthritis.

The convention is open to all interested physicians. Practitioners in northern Luzon are specially invited. For further inquiries, please call the secretariat at (02)726-8875/(074)445-6504 or visit the PRA office at Rm. 1408, 14/F North Tower, Cathedral Heights Building, St. Luke's Medical Center, Quezon City.

DOST introduces coconut fast dry technology

EXTRACTING high quality coconut oil along with food grade press cake has now been simplified and at a significantly shorter time through a process called fast drying system for coconut.

The Industrial Technology Development Institute (ITDI), an agency of the Department of Science and Technology, said the innovative coconut processing system could be a big productivity booster to the ageing, increasingly low-yielding coconut tree plantations in the country.

The fast drying system involves splitting, partial drying by high temperature, de-shelling, granulating, complete drying, and oil extraction. The entire process takes only six to eight hours, compared to the traditional coconut drying system that lasts up to 36 hours.

The shorter process results to clean coconut oil, clean press cake, and farm-fresh coconut meat that increases the profitability of the coconut processing trade.

Saturday **SPECIAL**

NESTOR U. TORRE, Editor **EDMUND SICAM**, Associate Editor

Which is the only A+ formula?

ASK YOUR PEDIATRICIAN TODAY.

MeadJohnson Nutritionals

Nobody does it like Joyce Jimenez

By Mary Ann A. Bautista

JIMENEZ. At 21, she's on top of the show biz world.

SHE'S an enigma. No wonder men fall for her like a ton of bricks and women envy her for her sex appeal. Simultaneously, she embodies both sensuality and innocence.

Hunks

At 21, Joyce Jimenez is on top of the world. She has a string of sexy films to her name. She acts with hunks like Troy Montero, Bobby Andrews and Jake Roxas on "Subic Bay."

And she will soon share stellar billing with Aga Muhlach in an untitled sitcom for ABS-CBN. She seems to have it all. What more does she want from life?

"More time with my family in Los Angeles. I always make an effort to be with them whenever I can take a break from work. I spent Christmas and New Year's Day with them.

"The holidays are about giving—not just gifts but giving my folks importance. My mom cooked turkey for Christmas, but we also had Filipino food like *pancit canton* and *puto*.

Filipino upbringing

"We had a Filipino upbringing. My favorite is *pritong talong* which I eat with banana catsup, liquid seasoning and tomatoes. Being with my family in Los Angeles was heaven," Joyce smiles.

What about gifts? Did she get what she wanted during the holidays?

"I'm ok with what I have. I can think of what I want to have but I appreciate whatever's been given to me. It really is the thought that counts!

"Whenever I give gifts, I always try to give things that have some meaning. A friend of mine likes dolphins, so I gave her something with dolphins. I want my friends and family to know that I pay attention to what they want," Joyce says.

She's not wanting for attention. But in 19[illegible] she joined a beauty contest in Los Angeles, California and lost. Fortunately, Joyce met her talent manager Shirley Kuan during that contest. When Joyce came to Manila for a vacation, she sought Shirley out and soon landed small roles in Viva Films' productions. Her big break came with "Scorpio Nights 2."

More responsible

"I love my work! It allows me to play roles that I just imagined before. It has made me mature and independent. Because of it, I have become more responsible and disciplined. I review all my lines before I face the cameras.

"I was so nervous while I was doing my love scenes in 'Scorpio Nights,' *pero ngayon sanay na ako*. Doing a love scene is like a dance, it has choreography.

"It's difficult to act when you're naked but I always follow the instructions of my directors. And I try to have a different look and hairstyle in each movie I make," Joyce shares.

Aside from acting, Joyce is passionate about swimming and staying fit, and she likes scented candles. She lavishes her body with body oils and lotions whenever she's under the sun. She follows a simple regular beauty routine of cleansing and moisturizing, but her diet had undergone several changes.

Loveless

Though loveless at the moment, Joyce dreams of meeting the right man someday. She also believes in fidelity in marriage. "Marriage is sacred to me. I was in a live-in relationship before, but I wouldn't do it again. I don't believe in divorce. What you see of me in my movies is my exact opposite.

Well, Joyce isn't so mysterious after all. She's independent yet vulnerable, sweet but strong-willed, fun-loving but old-fashioned—truly "dangerous" combinations in a woman!

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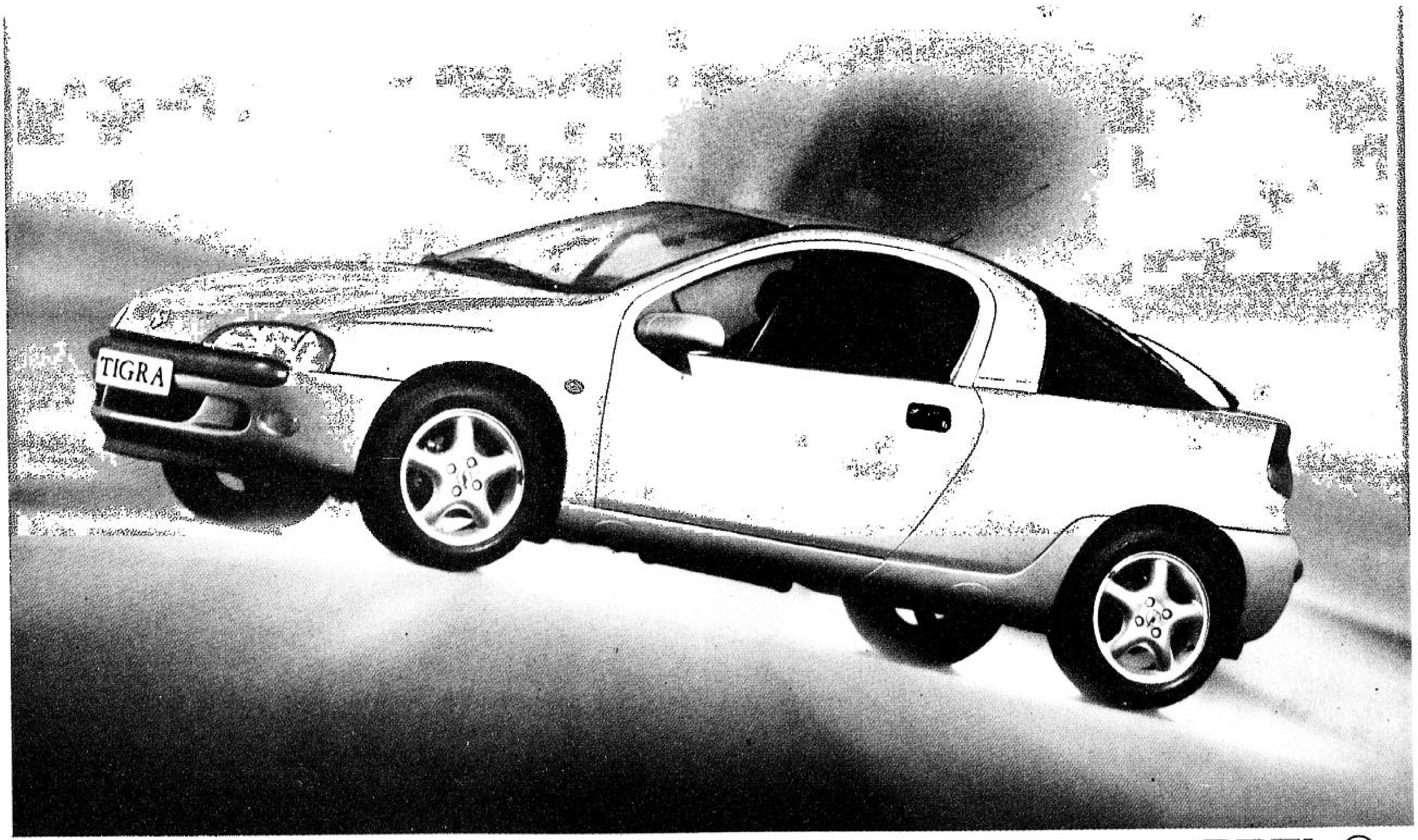

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Regine looks forward to another colorful year

By Edmund L. Sicam

REGINE Velasquez closed another colorful year in her life and career with a free concert at the Ynares Center in Antipolo City last week. The year 2000 saw Regine maintaining her status as a top recording artist and concert performer, but just as she was all set to conquer Pinoy audiences in the States, US Immigration spoiled her party by cancelling her US visa, along with those of the other members of the entourage.

Media went to town with stories about how Regine tried to sneak in some Filipinos in her group to work illegally in the US.

The usually media-friendly singer dropped out of sight for a while and became so depressed she wouldn't talk to anyone. When she did face the press during the launch of her album "Kailangan Ko'y Ikaw" she looked subdued, not her usual bubbly self.

Down but not out

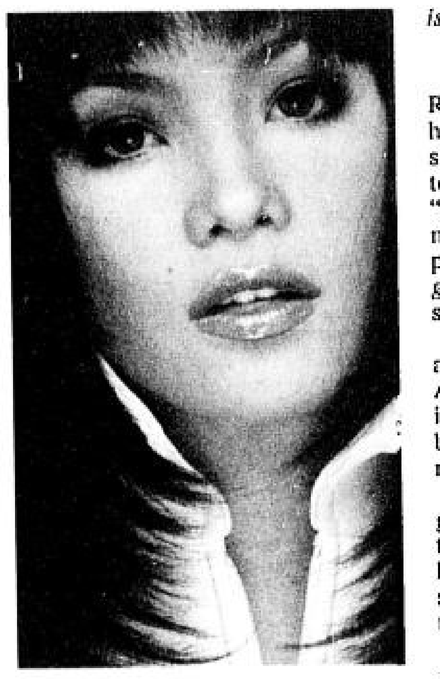
The Songbird was down but not out. Getting over her sad encounter with the Feds, she busied herself promoting her movie with Robin Padilla, "Kailangan Ko'y Ikaw," as well as the soundtrack album. The film did very well at the box office and broke the downward trend of the movie industry and the album went platinum in no time.

Recently, several entertainment journalists had an informal chat with Regine at Hard Rock Cafe Makati where she was her usual giggly, kooky self. Everyone was teasing her to musical director Gerard Salonga, who already has a girlfriend. The two have been working together lately so it's only natural for people to engage in wishful thinking.

Regine admitted that she and Gerard have the same musical taste – classics, standards and the latest hits. She said Gerard is easy to talk but beyond that she admitted nothing. Someone asked what she would do if Gerard and his girlfriend split up. Would she go for him?

"*Hindi ko alam*. I'll cross that bridge when I get there," Regine replies.

Then she added, "If you really know me, you'll know *kung may gusto ako sa isang tao.*"


VELASQUEZ. Spontaneous.

Ariel Rivera

The talk naturally shifted to Ariel Rivera, who used to court her. One of her staff confessed that they were responsible for egging Ariel on to go after Regine. The singer commented, "*Kayo pala nagsimula tapos* you blame me for what happened." Then she explained, "*Dati pa, alam ko na may gusto siya sa akin. Magaling ang* instinct *ko diyan.*"

But she said she never assumes that a guy is interested in her. So even when Ariel was already visiting her and bringing her flowers, she wasn't responding because she wanted Ariel to be very direct about his intentions.

If at all possible, she would rather get involved with someone outside of the entertainment world. All this time, her circle of friends has been limited to show biz personalities. She would like to expand her world.

Looking back at the year 2000, she acknowledged that the US Embassy incident was a low point in her career. "I'll always carry that shame with me. *Hindi talaga maganda.*" However, it had some positive effect because people talked about her. "There's usually nothing going on in my life," says Regine. "Suddenly, everyone wants to know more about the incident."

Platinum albums

But Regine doesn't need a scandal to be in the public eye. Her many platinum albums and box office performances are proof positive that she is an honest-to-goodness star.

Last month, for instance, we watched a concert at the Araneta Coliseum featuring Jeffrey Osborne and Peabo Bryson with Regine as a guest. Osborne opened the concert with several numbers that were unfamiliar.

The Big Dome was noticeably quiet until Osborne introduced Regine, and the crowd erupted with screams and applause. The minute she opened her mouth, the audience was alive and listening attentively to the singer.

Unlike some good singers who find it hard to express themselves between numbers, Regine connects very easily with her audience and she doesn't need to be scripted. In fact, it is this spontaneity that endears her to the public.

It was not always like this. Early in her career, Regine had to memorize long lines and she said she was uneasy delivering those spiels. As she gained confidence, the singer discovered she did better if she said the lines in her own words. Then later, she just threw the script away and talked about whatever was on her mind. She's not exactly a comic but somehow even her smallest observation generates laughter. She talks about her hair and her costume in an unflattering way and the audience reacts.

Movie with Aga

The New Year offers even bigger challenges for the singer. There are plans to do another movie with Aga Muhlach and an album of originals. There's talk about a regular TV series and there are all these concert producers lining up to put her onstage. It's going to be another busy year for the Concert Queen.

Yuletide yummies

WORD OF MOUTH

Sandy Daza

WITH all the difficulties and tension the country is going through, the usual excitement wasn't felt last Christmas. As fast as it came, it passed.

There was something else I noticed this season: a big decline in fruitcakes. There were also so many new entrepreneurs who got into the food business.

Best business

Many say that, in times of hardship, the best business is food. I agree but with so much good food being offered, there is also great competition, so to succeed, your food has to be exceptionally good.

Among the many new items that passed our table this season, three stood out. One was a box of mango squares and some good, old-fashioned brownies.

The mango squares were similar to the delicious lemon squares many of us have experienced but some fresh or dried mangoes were used to flavor the new creation. Delicious!

My children flipped over the chewy brownies. I tried to hide them to keep some for myself, but they were just too good to be kept secret for long. These items are made by Gela's Kitchen.

Another exceptional gift came from a good friend, Bibot Nolan: a plump boneless chicken *relleno*. I had heard so much about it in the past.

This one comes without a sauce. On its own, it is delicious. The smooth stuffing adds a nice texture to the dish. It tastes like some liver pate was mixed into it. Whatever it is, *masarap talaga.*

Apple pie

The last one I tried was an apple pie created by Kay Jimenez, with perfectly baked apples which were al dente (*pwede ba yon sa* apple pie?) and had a nice crust, a perfect compliment to the sweet filling. I loved it with some slices of Magnolia's *queso de bola*. A nice scoop of vanilla ice cream will also do wonders for this combination.

Contact numbers:

Gela's Kitchen—tel no 852-5814

Mrs. Galang's Relleno—tel no. 671-7460

Kay's Goodies (apple pie)—tel no. 431-8014

Happy eating!

My new cookbook, "Happy Eating" has just come out. I have a few copies at Sandy's Cuisine at Enterprise and SM Manila, and Mai Thai at Glorietta and Robinsons.

2001, an entertainment odyssey

By Nestor U. Torre

> Because it is so diverting, entertainment encourages us to relax and let down our guard, and this makes it much easier for the positive *and* negative values it propounds to affect us where we live and breathe

I TRUST that Arthur C. Clarke and Stanley Kubrick won't mind my cheeky adaptation of the title of their sensational 1968 sci-fi production, but the above reworked title is exactly right for what I urge entertainment buffs (I trust that includes you) to do: To take the shows, records, live performances and films produced this year not just for their own sake, but as signposts, landmarks and hopefully, touchstones that will help us make clearer sense of the role entertainment plays in our lives, for better or for worse.

Victims

If it turns out to be for better, great. But if it's for worse, we should do something to solve that problem, otherwise we'll continue to be victims of the wrongheaded influence of irresponsible entertainers on us and, more disturbingly, on our children.

Time was when people didn't realize the crucial role that media played in society. But people have finally gotten wise to that, so they are no longer us easily manipulated by the newsmongers in our midst.

But entertainment is a more amorphous threat. Since it's "only entertainment"—in other words, meant only to divert, to help us pass the time—it isn't perceived to be all that "serious," and hence not all that influential.

Subliminal messages

Psychologists think differently, however. They say that, precisely because entertainment is so ostensibly light and trivial, its subliminal messages work their way deep into our psyches, and affect us in ways we are not even aware of.

Because it is so diverting, entertainment encourages us to relax and let down our guard, and this makes it much easier for the positive *and* negative values it propounds to affect us where we live and breathe.

Violence

Take the subject of violence: when we see a man being violently beaten up in front of us, we cringe. And yet, when we watch an action film and see a character not just being beaten up but being shot to death, we find the scene disturbingly exciting.

What's the difference in our perception? The film is "only" a film, and the shooting scene is "only" an entertainment—That's clear to us on the logical level, but is the difference all that clear to our psyches?

Some psychologists note that viewers derive a perverse kind of excitement and even pleasure from seeing people being shot full of holes, blown to bits, eviscerated, decapitated and otherwise pulverized to kingdom come.

Values

This is completely contrary to the values that have been inculcated in us since childhood, which include deep respect for life and abhorrence of violence.

And yet action movies subliminally tell us that it's OK to enjoy death-dealing violence because it isn't real, it's done just to divert us, and anyway, the man being killed is a bad guy, and "deserves to die."

To exacerbate things, some filmmakers are so good at what they do that they make us forget that we're watching "only a movie." All storytellers work hard to achieve total audience empathy and suspension of disbelief, so we sometimes do forget that it's only a film that we're watching.

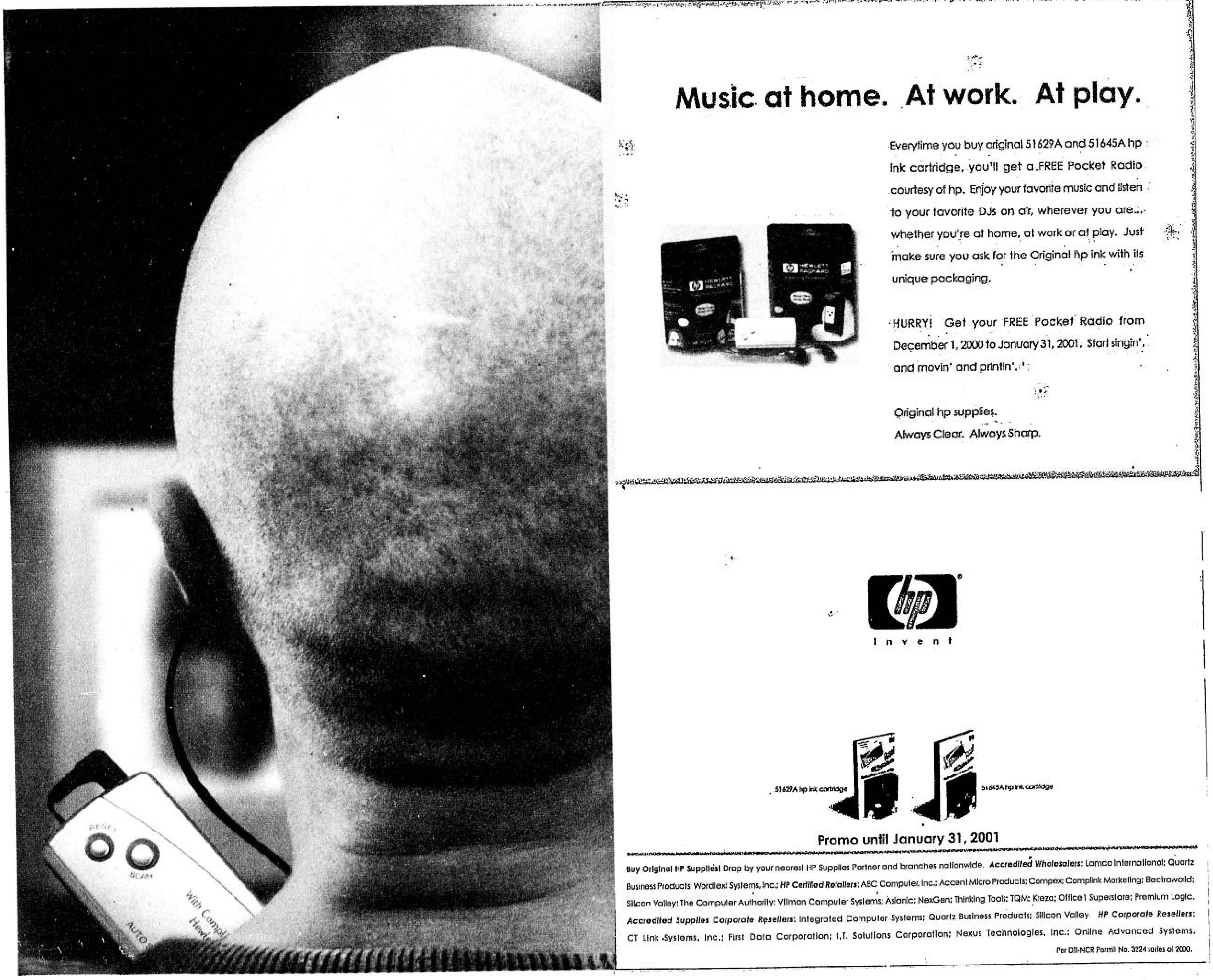
As a result, our emotions react completely to the scene at hand, and we find ourselves perversely enjoying the sight of the goon being killed. What happens to our "deeply-entrenched" values, then? They experience a roller-coaster ride of contradictory impulses, that's what.

Effects

That's why psychologists, educators and parents are so deeply concerned about the effects of film violence on viewers, specially on minors. It's been noted that, while watching TV, young viewers are exposed to hundreds of acts of "pretend" violence each viewing year.

Psychologists are worried because their studies show that children sometimes can't tell the difference between "pretend" violence and the real thing. So, if they are told that it's OK to enjoy violence on TV and in the movies, the danger is that they'll find real violence appealing as well.

Another danger is that, with violence being treated so casually on the big and small screens, kids could soon get inured to it, and to the seriousness of its effects—in their reel *and* real forms.



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ANNOUNCEMENT

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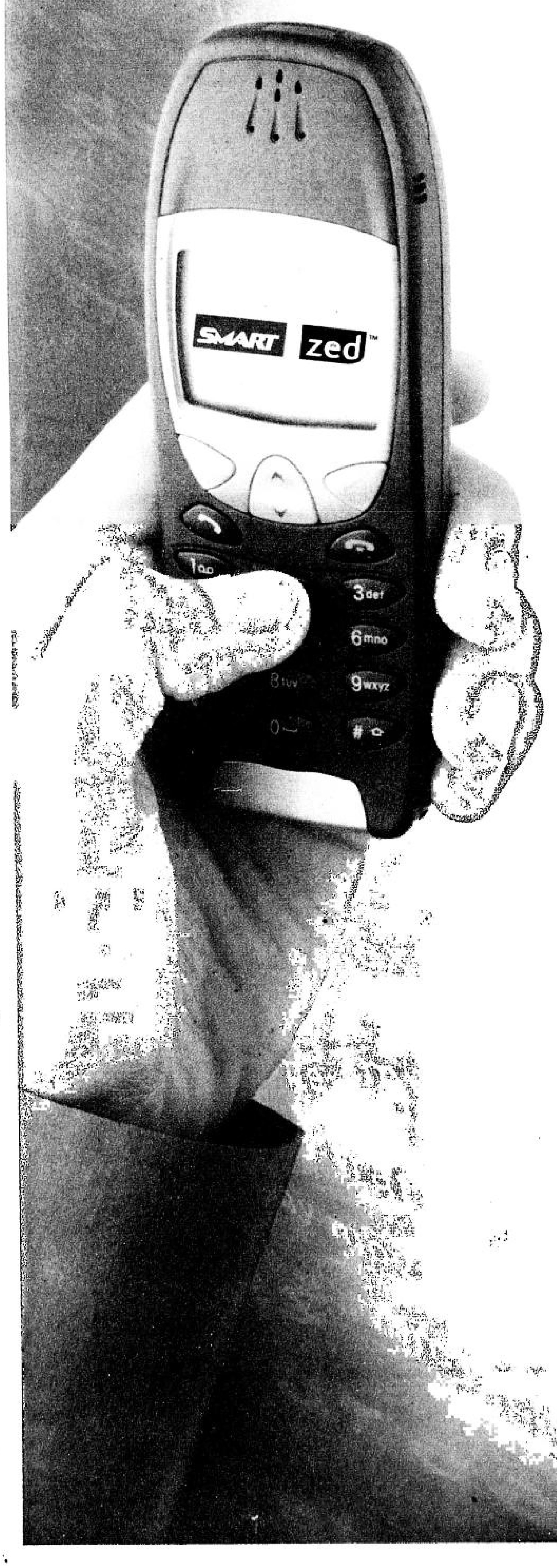


1. What is SMART zed?

SMART zed is a mobile portal that houses local and global information and data services from SMART and Sonera zed. The concept is similar to a hypermarket or "supermall" where you can buy all kinds of goods and commodities. In the case of SMART zed, you can avail of the widest range of information and services on your SMART GSM celfone. SMART zed services are all network-based and thus, are not dependent on any particular SIM card. All you need is a SMART GOLD or BUDDY subscription to automatically enjoy SMART zed services.

2. How do I access SMART zed services?

ALL SMART zed services are AUTOMATICALLY available to all existing and future SMART GOLD & BUDDY subscribers. You can access SMART zed services using your current SMART GSM subscription in three ways:

- Wireless Application Protocol or W@P
- Text Messaging via the SMART zed STK SIM card
- Text Messaging via keywords

3. Do I have to register to access SMART zed?

No, there is no need to register to access SMART zed services. SMART zed is automatically available to all SMART GSM subscribers.

4. What are the requirements to access SMART zed services?

The only requirement to access SMART zed services, is that you are an active SMART GOLD or BUDDY subscriber.

5. Do I have to upgrade or change my current celfone to access SMART zed services?

No, there is no need to change or upgrade your current celfone. You can access SMART zed services using your current SMART dual-band GSM celfone.

6. Do I have to upgrade or change my current SIM card to access SMART zed services?

No, you do not have to change or upgrade your current SIM card, whether it be a 32K STK, a JAVA MBS or a non-STK SIM card. However, life would be so much easier if you had a SMART zed STK SIM card.

7. What is the SMART zed STK SIM card?

The SMART zed STK SIM card is a menu-driven, click-and-browse type of SIM card which allows you quick access to the wide array of SMART zed services. You simply scroll down the SMART zed Menu on your SIM card and click on your desired service. It's fast, convenient and very easy to use.

8. How do I get a SMART zed STK SIM card?

You can get the SMART zed STK SIM card by buying it from your nearest TSI outlet, at any SMART dealer or SMART Telecenter. Suggested retail price of a SMART BUDDY SIM Pack with a SMART zed STK SIM card is P990 (VAT inclusive).

9. When using W@P, how do I access SMART zed services?

If you are using W@P on your SMART GSM W@P celfone, you can access SMART zed services by logging on to the SMART W@P site and clicking on the SMART zed link. This will bring you to the SMART zed W@P site where you can access and enjoy all of SMART zed's services.

10. When using a non SMART zed STK SIM card, how do I access SMART zed services?

If you are using a non-SMART zed STK SIM card, you can automatically access all SMART zed services. You can use the SMART zed Keywords Manual as a guide on how to request and order SMART zed services. Simply visit your nearest SMART Telecenter, TSI outlet or any authorized dealer to get a complimentary copy of the SMART zed Keywords Manual.

11. What does personalization of SMART zed services mean? How do I access it?

Personalization means that you can actually make a one-time order for specific information services. These services will be sent to your SMART GSM celfone regularly on the dates and times you asked for without requesting for them every time.

Both SMART zed STK and non-SMART zed STK users may order SMART zed services that they want to be sent to them regularly.

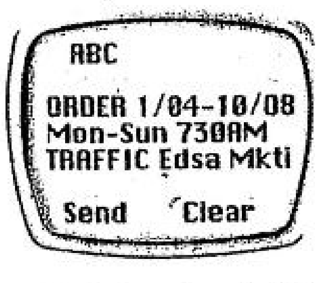
Here's how:

Web: To make your order via the Web, register your SMART GSM mobile number by logging on to **www.smart.zed.com**. After completing the process, you will then receive your SMART zed password. Log on and follow web instructions on how to order.

Text:

1) To make your order via Text Messaging, follow the text format:

ORDER	time period	frequency	time	KEYWORD	*parameter
a) ORDER	1/04-10/08	Mon-Sun	730AM	TRAFFIC	Edsa Mkti
b) ORDER	7/08-12/04	Sun	500PM	PBAPOW (PBA Player of the Week)	
c) ORDER	11/01-12/31	Mon-Sun	600AM	WEATHER	Cebu


A

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ABC

ORDER 1/04-10/08
Mon-Sun 730AM
TRAFFIC Edsa Mkti

Send  Clear
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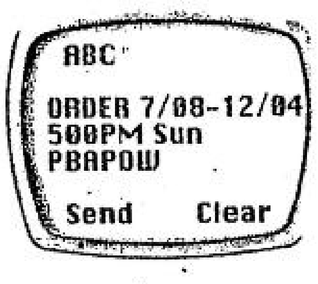
B

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ABC

ORDER 7/08-12/04
500PM Sun
PBAPOW

Send  Clear
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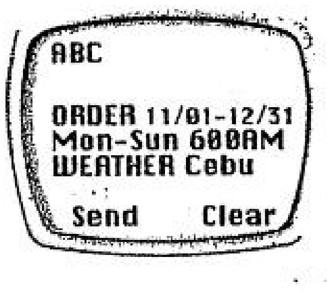

C

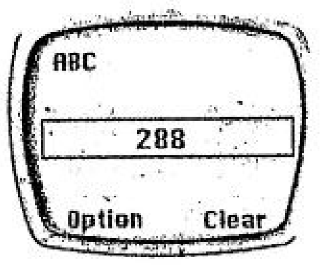
```
ABC

ORDER 11/01-12/31
Mon-Sun 600AM
WEATHER Cebu

Send  Clear
```

NOTE: Space is needed after every entry. PARAMETERS for different services are listed in the SMART zed Keywords Manual.

2) Send to 288.



```
ABC

288

Option  Clear
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12) What are the different SMART zed services that I can personalize?

NEWS
National News
Regional News
News in Tagalog
Frontpage
Saksi
World News
Asia Business News
Traffic Updates
Local Weather
Sports News
  PBA
  NBA
  Golf
  Tennis

GAMES
Sweepstakes
Lotto Results
Horse Racing
Trivia

ENTERTAINMENT
Horoscope
Jokes
Today in History
Word of the Day
Quote of the Day

LEISURE
Books
Movie List
Race Results

BANKING & BUSINESS
Stock Quotes
Stock Index
  (PSE, Mining, etc.)
Exchange Rates
Foreign Index
Mutual Fund Prices
Time Deposit Rates
Jobs

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

13. How do I access the new SMART zed PET PAL service?

With the SMART zed PET PAL service, you can own a virtual dog, cat, parrot or dolphin. Feed it with cereals, fish, meat, ice cream, or milk, or even give it a bath and put it to sleep. Follow the instructions below on the different pet actions available for the PET PAL service.

Get Pet	GETPET <pet name> *Choose from: SPARKEE (dog)* *KAYTEE (cat)* *CLAWEE (parrot)* *BUBLEE (dolphin)*	233
Change Pet name	PET NAME <new pet name> *Here, you may give your pet a unique name.*	233
Pet Action	PET BATHE	233
	PET CURE	233
	PET FEED <FOOD TYPE> *Choose from: CEREALS, FISH, MEAT, ICE CREAM, MEAT*	233
	PET HUG	233
	PET PLAY	233
	PET SLEEP	233
	PET HEALTH	233
Pet View	VIEWPET <PET NUMBER>	233

REMINDERS:

1) PET PAL service includes reminders or alerts which tell you how your pet is doing (like if it is hungry, dirty, sleepy, etc). These alert messages are NOT chargeable to you. They serve only to remind you about your pet. Charges begin only when you send a message or pet action. Please refer to your SMART zed Keywords Manual or scroll down the SMART zed Menu on your SMART zed STK SIM card to access the PET PAL service.

2) Viewing of your PET PAL is only available for NOKIA celfone models (For 6150 models, only versions higher than 4.11 are compatible). This function is operator logo-dependent. If you are using a non-Nokia celfone model, you can still maintain a PET PAL, however, you will not be able to view it.

3) To be able to view the pet, you have to type the 7-digit pet number. The number is given when you inquire about the health status of your pet (PET HEALTH and send to 233).

14. How do I request for ring tones, logos, icons and picture messages with SMART zed?

Requesting for ring tones, operator logos, caller group icons or picture messages on your NOKIA celfone is easy.

Picture Messages		
Get Picture	PIC <pic name>	288
Send Picture	PIC <pic name> <recipient's mobile number> <message>	288
New Picture	PIC NEW	288
Top Ten Pictures	PIC TOPTEN	288
Ring tones		
Get Tone	TONE <tone menu>	288
Send Tone	TONE <tone name> <recipient's mobile number>	288
New	TONE NEW	288
Top 10	TONE TOPTEN	288
Categories	TONEMENU	233
Search	TONESEARCH <category> or <title> or <artist>	233
Operator Logos		
Get Logo	LOGO <icon name>	288
Send Logo	LOGO <logo name> <recipient's mobile number>	288
New Logos	LOGO NEW	288
Top 10	LOGO TOPTEN	288
Categories	LOGOMENU	233
Search	LOGOSEARCH <category> or <name>	233
Group Icons		
Get Icons	ICON <icon name>	288
Send icons	ICON <icon name> <recipient's mobile number>	288
New	ICON NEW	233
Top 10	ICON TOPTEN	233

Please refer to your SMART zed Keywords Manual or scroll down the SMART zed Menu on your SMART zed STK SIM card to access these services.

REMINDERS:

a) Downloading of RING TONES and OPERATOR LOGOS can only be done using NOKIA 3210, 3310, 6150, 6210, 7110, 8210 and 8850 celfone models.
b) Downloading of CALLER GROUP ICONS can only be done using NOKIA 6150, 6210, 7110, 8210 and 8850 celfone models.
c) Downloading of PICTURE MESSAGES can only be done using NOKIA 3210, 3310, 6210, 8210 and 8850 celfone models.

15. What are the charges / rates of SMART zed services?

Basic SMART zed Info service	P2.50/request
Download of Ring tones, Logos, Caller Group Icons, Picture Messages	P12/request
SMART zed Finder	P15/ request

16. Am I charged for the message I send or for the message I receive?

You are only charged for the message you send. For instance, if you request for NEWS, you only pay P2.50 for it even if the reply to you is a three-part text message. Also, you will not be charged for "The info you requested is not available at the moment" replies.

17. Where can I get more information about SMART zed?

You can get more information about SMART zed by visiting the SMART website at **www.smart.com.ph** or **www.smart.zed.com**. You can also visit the SMART Telecenter nearest you to pick up a copy of the SMART zed Keywords Manual. For SMART zed inquiries, you can e-mail us at **customercare@smart.com.ph.**

SMART zed your celfone now!

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

Quality sells

UNTIL the Dec. 30, 2000 bombings scared people away from the malls, the Metro filmfest movies were doing unusually good business. Even after the festival's conclusion, some of the official entries are on holdover engagements in quite a number of theaters, proof positive that, in the movie business, quality now sells.

We trust that our producers have learned this lesson and will give us well-produced films from here on in. If they revert to the "cheapie-quickie" practices of old, the gains they made during the filmfest shall be quickly eroded, and we will all be back to square one. What a pity that would be!

If you haven't seen "Tanging Yaman," "Spirit Warriors" "Markova, Comfort Gay," "Deathrow," "Ping Lacson Story" and "Sugatang Puso," they're still showing in some Metro Manila theaters, with the first two films being shown on more screens than the others.

Tribute to Mother

Loyal fans of Sampaguita Pictures productions still remember the work of musical director Danny Holmsen on many of the romances and teen romps produced by that pioneering movie studio. As a musical keepsake and tribute, Holmsen has come out with an album, "Danny Holmsen Presents My Mother," released through Aquarius Records and Tapes.

The album leads off with Holmsen's composition, "My Mother" interpreted by Nino Javier. Other cuts include Holmsen's "Happy Birthday to Me," sung by Pilita Corrales; Restie Umali and George Sison's "Tayo Rin Naman Ay Umibig," performed by Cely Bautista; Holmsen performing his own "Danny's Theme," and Pilita singing George Sison's "Amor, Que Te Voy A Llamar."

QUALITY/P. C7

YOUR WEEKLY TV GUIDE FROM JAN. 6 - 12

CH	2	4	5	7	9	13	23	29	E! 31
[illegible]	5:30 Magandang Gabi, Bayan 7:00 Ariba, Ariba 8:30 Star Drama Theater 9:30 Pinoy Exposed 10:00 Keep on Dancing 11:00 Loren / "F" 12:00 The Weekend News	6:00 Cartoon Hour 7:00 On-Line Bingo 8:00 SOF 9:00 Lotto Draw 9.15 Road to Sydney 10.15 Fashion Watch 10.45 Olympic Primer 11.15 National Network News 12:00 Game of a Thousand Thrills	6.00 Princess Tenko 6:30 Sailormoon Super S 7.00 Easy Money 8.00 Ispup 9.00 Eezy Dancing Non-Stop 10:00 Saturday Night Movies 12.00 Diagnosis Murder	5.30 Brigada Siete 7:00 Kakabakaba 8:00 Kiss Muna 9.30 GMA's BEST *The Shadow Conspiracy* 11:00 Master Showman Presents 12 00 GMA Network News 12 30 The 700 Club 1.00 Jesus Miracle Crusade	6.00 SaBayan 7:00 Conan 8.00 Martial Law 9:00 Saturday Night Playhouse 11:00 Business Class 11:30 Late Night Movie	5.00 H2K 6:00 Viva Premiere Night 9.00 Kagat sa Dilim 10:00 Gags Must Be Crazy 11:00 Night Lines	4:00 MBA 7:00 Two of a Kind 7:30 Seventh Heaven 8:30 Party of Five 9.30 Studio 23 *Point Break* 12.00 MTV	3:00 O Show Case 7.00 Xclusive Cinema Special 9:00 Oras ng Katotohanan 9.30 Armor of God 10:00 Oh Tokyo 11.00 Pinoy Wrestling	6:00 CBS Evening News 6.30 E! Coming Attractions 7:00 E! Special *Celebrity Causes* 8:00 E! Special *Gays in Hollywood* 9.00 E! True Hollywood Story *Ray Combs* 10:00 David Letterman Show 11:00 Wild On: *The Greek Isles* 12:00 Search Party
[illegible]	5:30 Knowledge Power 6:00 Sharon 7:00 Wansapanataym 8:30 Richard Loves Lucy 9:30 ABS-CBN Presents 11:00 The Weekend News 11:30 Oh No, It's Johnny	6.00 Uncut 6.30 Ugat 7:00 On-Line Bingo 8:00 Primetime Specials 10:00 National Network News 10:30 Sultada 11:00 Business & Leisure 12:00 Game of a Thousand Thrills	5:00 Tarzan 6:00 Savage Dragon 6:30 Janperson 7:00 Sing-Galing 8:00 Wow Mali! 9:00 Sunday Night Specials 11:00 Johnny Walker Powerplay 11:30 Sentinel	5:30 Partners Mel and Jay 7:00 Idol Ko Si Kap 8:30 GMA Love Stories 9:30 Sunday Night Box Office 11:30 Sunday Night Specials 12:00 GMA Network News 12:30 A Little Night of Music 1:00 The 700 Club	5:30 Hollywood Squares 6:00 Compañero y Compañera 7:00 Ripley's Believe It or Not 8:00 Kids Say the Darndest Things 8:30 Stark Raving Mad 9:00 Sunday's Big Event 11:00 Sunday Report 11:30 Estrada Presidency	4:00 PBA 9:00 Sinemaks 11:00 In His Steps 11:30 PBA Moments	4:00 MBA 7.00 Dawson's Creek 8:00 The Nanny 8:30 Will and Grace 9:00 Veronica's Closet 9:30 Wasteland 10:30 Digital Tour 11:00 Sunday Night Movies	5.00 Quartermaster Window Shop 7.00 Sunday Mini-Series 8.00 Oh Tokyo 9.00 Sunday Night Movies 11:00 Bikini Open	6.00 Talk Soup 6:30 CBS Evening News 7:00 60 Minutes 8:00 E! Special *TV Taboos* 9.00 E! True Hollywood Story *Heidi Fleiss* 11:00 Celebrity Profile *Hunter Tylo* 12.00 Talk Soup
[illegible]	6:00 TV Patrol 6:30 Saan Ka Man Naroroon 7:00 Pangako sa 'Yo 7:30 Kaya ni Mister, Kaya ni Misis 9:00 Judy Ann Drama Special 10:30 Headlines 11:00 On Trial 11:30 Correspondents 12:30 Martin Late@Nite	5.30 Pambansang Balita 6:00 Cartoon Hour 7:00 On-Line Bingo 8:00 Pilipino Box-Office 9.00 Lotto Draw 10 15 National Network News 11.00 Job Network/Fora Medica 12.00 Game of a Thousand Thrills	6:00 Gintong Pangarap 6:30 Transformers Original 7:00 Macron 1 7:30 Freakazoid 8:00 By Request 9:00 Spy Games 10:00 The Big News 10:30 Beach Patrol 11:30 High Tide	6:00 Saksi 6:30 Trigun 7:00 Dragonball Z 7:30 Pinoy Blockbusters *Boy Kristyano* 9:30 Tuwing Kapiling Ka 10:30 Front Page 11.00 I-Witness 12:00 The 700 Club 12:30 Midnight Prayer Helps	5:30 Arangkada Xtra Balita 6:00 Quinceañera 6:30 May Bukas Pa 7:00 Siempre Te Amare 7:30 Maria del Cielo 8:00 Michael Hayes 9:00 The X-Files 10:00 Primetime Balita 10:30 Honasan Reports	7:00 Blow By Blow 8.00 Who Wants To Be A Millionaire? 9:00 Viva Proudly Presents 10:30 Super Bouts 11:00 Ronda Trese 11:30 PBA Moments	6:00 MTV Diyes 7:00 Greed 7:30 Making the Band 8:00 Time of Your Life 9:00 Charmed 10:00 News Central 10:30 Points of View 11:30 Secret Lives of Men 12:00 MTV	4:30 Quartermaster 6:30 O Showcase 7:30 Oras ng Katotohanan 8:00 O Showcase 9.00 Ang Dating Daan 10:00 O Showcase	6:00 CBS Evening News 6:30 E! News Daily 7:00 Fashion Emergency 7:30 Celebrity Homes 8:00 E! Behind the Scenes 8:30 E! Mysteries & Scandals 9:00 E! True Hollywood Story 10:00 David Letterman Show 11:00 Wild On 12:00 Search Party
[illegible]	6:00 TV Patrol 6:30 Saan Ka Man Naroroon 7:00 Pangako sa 'Yo 7:30 Oka Tokat 8:30 Regal Presents 10:30 Headlines 11:00 On Trial 11:30 Pipol 12:30 Martin Late@Nite	5:30 Pambansang Balita 6:30 Cartoon Hour 7:00 On-Line Bingo 8:00 PBL 9:00 Lotto Draw 10.15 National Network News 11:00 Business Insight 12.00 Game of a Thousand Thrills	6:00 Gintong Pangarap 6:30 Transformers Original 7:00 G.I. Joe 7:30 Superman (Animated) 8:00 Hercules 9:00 Team Knight Rider 10:00 The Big News 10:30 Kontak 5 11:30 F/X The Series 12:30 The Big News (Replay)	6:00 Saksi 6:30 Monster Rancher 7:00 Virtua Fighter 7:30 Kool Ka Lang 9:00 Kasangga 10:30 Front Page 11:00 The Probe Team 11:30 700 Club 12:00 Pulpit of Christ	5:30 Arangkada Xtra Balita 6:00 Quinceañera 6:30 May Bukas Pa 7:00 Siempre Te Amare 7:30 Maria del Cielo 8:00 Ally McBeal 9:00 The Practice 10:00 Primetime Balita 10:30 Jay Sonza's Tapatan 11:30 Ngayon Na Pinoy	6:00 Rising Stars of Billiards 7:00 DMZ TV 8.00 Who Wants To Be A Millionaire? 9:00 Now Showing 11.00 Ronda Trese	6:00 MTV Most Wanted 7:00 Greed 7:30 Popular 8:30 Beverly Hills 90210 9:30 Then Came You 10:00 News Central 10:30 Oprah 11:15 Secret Lives of Men 12:45 MTV	4:30 Quartermaster 6:30 O Showcase 7:30 Oras ng Katotohanan 8.00 Ang Dating Daan (Live)	6:00 CBS Evening News 6:30 E! News Daily 7:00 E! Fashion Emergency 7:30 Celebrity Homes 8:00 E! Behind the Scenes 8:30 E! Mysteries & Scandals 9:00 E! True Hollywood Story 10:00 David Letterman Show 11:00 Wild On 12:00 Search Party
[illegible]	6:00 TV Patrol 6:30 Saan Ka Man Naroroon 7:00 Pangako sa 'Yo 7:30 Pwedeng-Pwede 9:00 Katapat, Fred Lim 10:30 Headlines 11:00 On Trial 11:30 Isyu 101 12:30 Martin Late@Nite	5:30 Pambansang Balita 6.00 Cartoon Hour 7:00 On-Line Bingo 8:00 HBO Boxing 9:00 Lotto Draw 9:15 Tapatan Walang Atrasan 10.15 National Network News 11:00 Nature Trip 12:00 Game of a Thousand Thrills	6:00 Gintong Pangarap 6:30 Transformers Original 7:00 Sabrina 7:30 Suddenly Susan 8:00 Frasier 8:30 Friends 9:00 E.R. 10:00 The Big News 10:30 Musika Atbp 11:30 Police Academy	6:00 Saksi 6:30 Trigun 7:00 Dragonball Z 7:30 Beh Bote Nga 9:00 Codename Verano 10:30 Front Page 11:00 Imbestigador 12:00 The 700 Club	5:30 Arangkada Xtra Balita 6:00 Quinceañera 6:30 May Bukas Pa 7:00 Siempre Te Amare 7:30 Maria del Cielo 8:00 Roswell 9:00 It's A Miracle 10:00 Primetime Balita 10:30 Wrestling 11:30 Kasangga Mo'y Langit	5:00 PBA 10:00 Subic Bay 11:00 Ronda Trese 11:30 PBA Moments	7:00 Fantasy Island 9:00 Gameplan 10:00 News Central 10:30 Oprah 11:15 The Explorer 12.45 MTV	4:30 Quartermaster 6:30 O Showcase 7:30 Oras ng Katotohanan 8:00 O Showcase 9.00 Ang Dating Daan 10:00 O Showcase	6:00 CBS Evening News 6:30 E! News Daily 7.00 E! Fashion Emergency 7:30 Celebrity Homes 8:00 E! Behind the Scenes 8:30 E! Mysteries & Scandals 9:00 E! True Hollywood Story 10:00 David Letterman Show 11:00 Wild On 12:00 Search Party
[illegible]	6:00 TV Patrol 6:30 Saan Ka Man Naroroon 7:00 Pangako sa 'Yo 7:30 Home Along da Riles 9.00 Maalaala Mo Kaya 10:30 Headlines 11:00 On Trial 11:30 Assignment 12:30 Martin Late@Nite	5:30 Pambansang Balita 6.00 Cartoon Hour 7.00 On-Line Bingo 8:00 PBL 9:00 Lotto Draw 10.15 National Network News 11:00 Olympic Program 12:00 Game of a Thousand Thrills	6:00 Gintong Pangarap 6:30 Transformers Original 7:00 Guinness World Records 8:00 Soldier of Fortune 9:00 Burning Zone 10:00 The Big News 10:30 Strangers 11:30 New York Undercover Year 2 12:00 The Big News	6:00 Saksi 6:30 Monster Rancher 7:00 Virtua Fighter 7:30 1 For 3 8:30 Viva Sinerama 10:30 Front Page 11:00 Debate with Mare at Pare 12:00 700 Club 12:30 Word of Hope	5:30 Arangkada Xtra Balita 6:00 Quinceañera 6:30 May Bukas Pa 7:00 Siempre Te Amare 7:30 Maria del Cielo 8:00 Buffy, The Vampire Slayer 9:00 Felicity 10:00 Primetime Balita 10:30 Chicago Hope 11:30 Police Hour	5:30 NBA Game of the Week 8.00 Who Wants To Be A Millionaire? 9:00 Thursday Nights at the Movies 11:00 Ronda Trese 11.30 PBA Moments	6:00 MTV Non-Stop Hits 6:30 Be Seen @ MTV 7:00 Greed 7:30 Cineplex 23 *A Walk in the Clouds* 9:30 Guide to Urban Living 10:00 News Central 10:30 Oprah 11:15 Travel Time 12:00 MTV	4:30 Quartermaster 6:30 O Showcase 7:30 Oras ng Katotohanan 8:00 O Showcase 9.00 Ang Dating Daan 10:00 O Showcase	6:00 CBS Evening News 6:30 E! News Daily 7:00 E! Fashion Emergency 7.30 Celebrity Homes 8:00 E! Behind the Scenes 8:30 E! Mysteries & Scandal 9:00 E! True Hollywood Story 10:00 David Letterman Show 11:00 Wild On 12:00 Search Party
[illegible]	6:00 TV Patrol 6:30 Saan Ka Man Naroroon 7.00 Pangako sa 'Yo 7:30 Digimon 8:00 Young Hercules 8:30 Star Cinema Presents 10.30 Headlines 11:00 On Trial 11:30 Julie 12:30 Martin Late@Nite	5:30 Pambansang Balita 6:00 Cartoon Hour 7:00 On-Line Bingo Pilipino 8:00 Street Legal 9:00 Lotto Draw 9:15 Pulso ng Masa 10:15 National Network News 11:00 The Scene 12:00 Game of a Thousand Thrills	6:00 Gintong Pangarap 6:30 Transformers Original 7:00 Sliders 8:00 The Big Night 10:00 The Big News 10.30 Friday Box Office	6:00 Saksi 6:30 Trigun 7:00 Dragonball Z 7:30 Pokemon 8:00 Fushigi Yuugi 8:30 Bubble Gang 10:00 What Went Wrong 10:30 Front Page 11:00 Emergency 12:30 700 Club	5:30 Arangkada Xtra Balita 6:00 Quinceañera 6:30 May Bukas Pa 7:00 Siempre Te Amare 7:30 Maria del Cielo 8:00 Malcolm in the Middle 8:30 Dharma and Greg 9:00 The Truth and Nothing But 10:00 Primetime Balita 10:30 TV Greats on Friday	5:00 The Color of Money 10:00 Kabayo, Karera, Karerista 11:00 Ronda Trese 11.30 Last Fool Show	6:00 Monster By Mistake 6:30 Batman 7:00 Greed 7:30 Survivor 8:30 Snoops 9:30 Murphy Brown 10:00 News Central 10:30 Oprah 11:15 Cityline 12:00 MTV	4:30 Quartermaster 6:30 O Showcase 7:30 Oras ng Katotohanan 8.00 Ang Dating Daan (Live)	6:00 CBS Evening News 6:30 E! News Daily 7:00 E! Fashion Emergency 7.30 Celebrity Homes 8:00 E! Behind the Scenes 8:30 E! Mysteries & Scandals 9:00 E! True Hollywood Story 10:00 David Letterman Show 11:00 Wild On 12:00 Search Party

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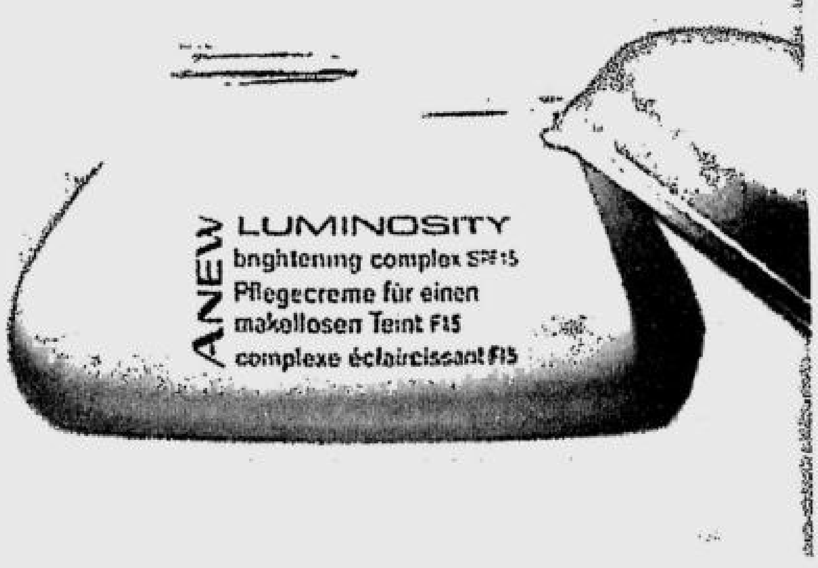
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Family above everything else

STREET SMART

Mandy Navasero

AFTER the hustle and bustle of the holiday celebrations last December, some people look to January as a time for slowing down on their social schedule. Well, for most people, maybe, but not for the likes of Ms Mellie Ablaza. There is, in fact, no month she can remember when her social calendar registered a zero.

Annual celebration

This month, Mellie and her husband, Louie will be playing their usual roles of *Hermana* and *Hermano mayores* at the annual celebration of the Fiesta del Sto. Niño of the religious organization, the Congregacion del Santisimo Nombre del Niño Jesus.

There will be many others who will share the honor of being called *hermano* or *hermana mayor* every year but to the Ablaza couple, it is the crowning glory of their simple devotion to the Santo Niño.

"I have a black Niño Jesus," Mellie narrates, "which I got from an antique shop. It is made of old wood and it is worn out in some parts, even its face.

"I cannot say it is my favorite, and there are no special favors or miracles that surrounded it, but my husband and I have a certain fondness for it. We call it the Santo Niño del Eucharistia."

Over the years, the Ablaza couple and the Congregacion's founding chairman, Mr. Ben Ferrales, have developed a warm friendship. And Mellie finds herself drawn to the other socio-civic projects of Mang Ben, as the designer is fondly called by close friends.

Exhibit venue

For the Fiesta del Sto. Niño 2001, the exhibit venue is again the Philippine National Bank building at the PNB Financial Center in Pasay City. The exhibit will be open to the public from Jan. 19 to 27.

The grand procession takes place on Jan. 28. Interested parties may get in touch with Daisy Reyes at the Congregacion office at the Pope Pius Center on United Nations ave., Manila (phone number 525-9126) or Ben Farrales (525-3421 or 524-8439).

One of the Ablaza family's businesses is the Ablaza Pawnshop, which has more than 60 branches today.

Mellie is a lawyer who passed the bar but never practiced her profession since she has been waylaid into various family businesses. But her family always takes precedence over everything.

Indeed, Mellie continues to be blessed by God's generosity, which she tries to reciprocate by immersing herself more and more in undertakings which are philanthropic in nature.

FROM left, Marc Ablaza with wife Tessa, Mellie and Louie Ablaza and son Junjun. The *carroza* bearing the image of the family's Santo Niño del Eucharistia is shown behind them.

Quality . . .

(From page C6)

Other numbers: "My Faithful Love" (Holmsen-Hermie Ilagan)," in loving memory of the Reycards' Reynaldo Ramirez; Cely Bautista and Nino Javier singing "Teenager" (lyrics by Levi Celerio); Holmsen performing "My Foolish Heart"; Nino Javier singing Holmsen's "I Wish"; Pilita Corrales interpreting Paz Yuchengco's "Mi Amor"; Cely Bautista singing Homsen's "Laging Ikaw";

Holmsen performing his composition, "Song for Maria"; "I'll Never Walk Alone" (in loving memory of Reynaldo Ramirez); "Tapat na Pag ibig" (Holmsen-Ading Fernando) sung by Cely and Nino; "The Wonder of You" performed by Danny Holmsen, and the Mabuhay Singers performing the lively "Despatsadora" (Holmsen-Ading Fernando). Paging all nostalgia buffs!

TV treats

At 10 a.m. today, Viva Cinema 23 screens "College Girls" with sexy stars Hazel Espinosa and Jasmine Tolentino.

At 7 p.m., ABC-5 brings back "Tropang Trumpo," the gag show that started it all, on a limited return engagement.

At 8 p.m. on Tuesday, Jan. 9, the film on Viva Cinema 23 is "Alex San Diego: Wanted," with Rudy Fernandez, George Estregan and Isabel Rivas.

Golden Globe nominees on Star World

Star World will telecast the 58th Golden Globe Awards live at 9 a.m. on Jan. 22 from the Beverly Hilton in Beverly Hills, California, USA. Five of the channel's shows have been nominated for awards in various categories:

"The Practice"—best performance by an actor in a TV series, drama (Dylan McDermott); best TV series, drama.

"Buffy the Vampire Slayer"—best performance by an actress in a TV series, drama (Sarah Michelle Gellar).

"Ally McBeal"—best TV series, musical or comedy; best performance by an actress in a TV series, musical or comedy (Calista Flockhart); best performance by an actor in a supporting role in a series, mini-series or motion picture made for TV (Robert Downey, Jr.).

"Frasier"—best TV series, musical or comedy; best performance by an actor in a TV series, musical or comedy (Kelsey Grammer); best performance by an actor in a supporting role in a series, mini-series or motion picture made for TV (John Mahoney, David Hyde Pierce).

"Everybody Loves Raymond"—best performance by an actor in a TV series, musical or comedy (Ray Romano).

Cheche's Pinatubo adventure

This Sunday on "Cheche Lazaro Presents: The Philippine Series" (11:30 p.m., GMA-7), Cheche goes on a grueling 12-hour trek up Mt. Pinatubo in Pampanga. Then she ventures on to Patal-Bato, an Aeta village where she meets some friendly locals.

Cheche also takes to the skies in an ultra-lite, a compact aircraft, to get an unobstructed view of Pinatubo and the Clark Development Zone.

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My Mother
INAY

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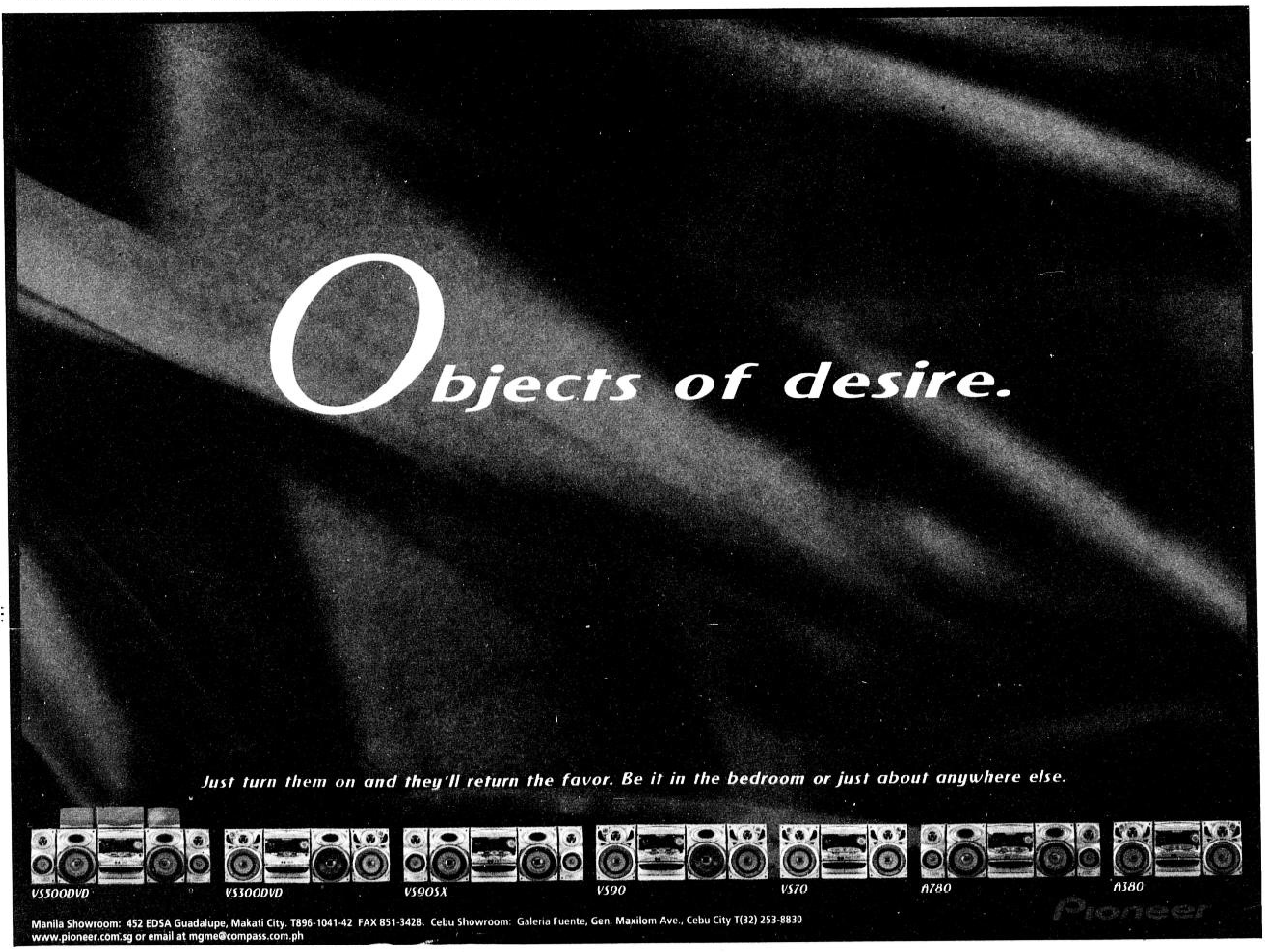
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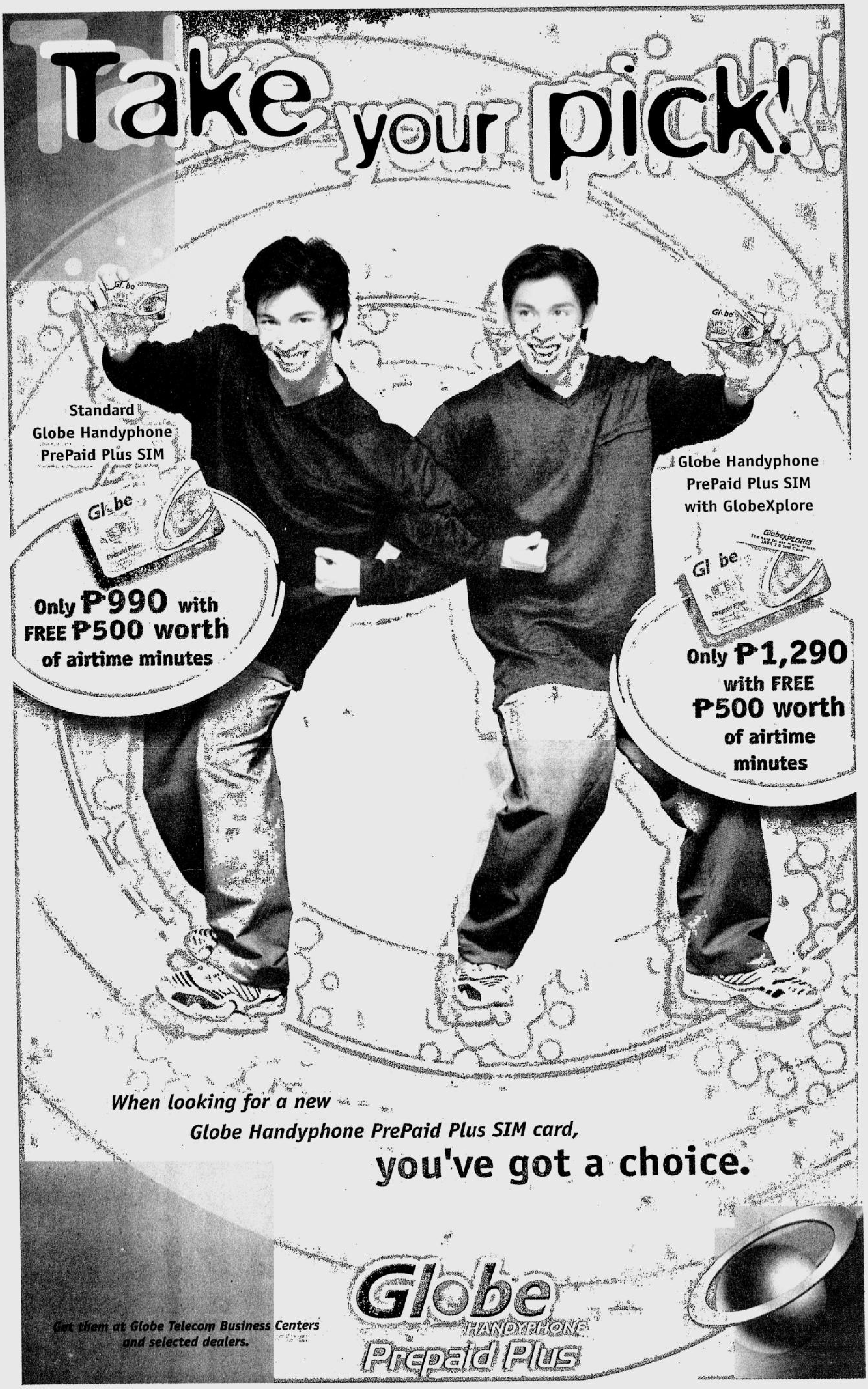

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Fans revisit James Dean's birthplace

A STATUE of James Dean appears outside the James Dean Memorial Gallery in Fairmount, Indiana.

Dean would only make three films in his brief but storied career

By Amy Sancetta

FAIRMOUNT, Indiana — The roads of Fairmount, Indiana are long and straight and endless, cutting a patchwork across the landscape of cornfields. As a teenager, James Dean must have found the flat expanses of earth perfect for his motorcycle rides. A place to dream about getting out, moving on, and making it.

Tragic death

Forever young because of his tragic death in an automobile accident at age 24 in 1955, movie icon and bad boy James Dean would have turned 70 on Feb. 8, 2001, a fact that must make baby boomers feel old.

A visit to his hometown of Fairmount in northeastern Indiana has become a pilgrimage for the curious and the loyal fans around the world. And there are just enough sites to see amidst the cornfields to bring the youth and rebelliousness of Dean back to life.

Dean was born in neighboring Marion, Indiana. His family moved to Fairmount when he was an infant, and then on to California when Dean was 5. When his mother died, 9-year-old James returned to Fairmount to live with his aunt and uncle, Ortense and Marcus Winslow. He remained in Fairmount through his high school graduation, and then hit the road for Hollywood.

Dean would make only three films in his brief but storied career—"East of Eden," "Rebel Without A Cause" and "Giant"—but only the first was released before his death. He had two more film projects on his schedule, but after his death, both roles went to another young heartthrob—Paul Newman.

First glimpse

Bleak with winter's gray, a first glimpse of Fairmount might make a visitor think that if Dean had never become an actor, he might not have been the "Rebel Without a Cause," but the rebel without a view. Corn, silos, and more corn surround this tiny hamlet.

The town itself is just a short strip of storefronts, a bank, a bar, the closed-down Legends Diner. But a further look reveals a handful of antique and collectible shops, and the first sighting of James Dean--a cardboard cutout between posters of Van Halen and John Mellencamp in the window of the Hi-Fi Stereo Shop.

Just north of Main Street, where the tiny business district turns residential, is a Victorian house which is home to the James Dean Memorial Gallery. It's the place to begin the journey down the Avenue of Broken Dreams.

Shop owner and unofficial "Dean of Deanabilia," David Loehr opened the seven-room museum and gift shop in 1988. It's packed to overflowing with the trappings of the life of the rebel Dean.

For a small fee, visitors can see a room after room of Dean memorabilia. Posters and paintings and letters and photographs abound. Dean's Lee Rider Jeans from his final film "Giant;" his likeness in wax which was on display for 20 years at the Coney

Island Wax Museum; a copy of the speeding ticket he was issued the day of his death; and a sheet where a grade-school Dean practiced again and again the spelling of his name—"Jimmie Dean, Jimmie Dean."

Campy collectibles

Campy collectibles are also included. There are cases of Dean mugs and clocks, lighters and snowglobes.

There are posters from the debut of his films from around the world, signed movie scripts and photographs of him in high school theater productions and playing hoops on the hardwood.

A small 11-seat screening room shows a highlight film of Dean's work and life. In one haunting public service announcement made for the Los Angeles County Safety Council, Dean turns from fellow actor Gig Young and ad-libs to the camera:

"When you're out there on the highway, be careful, because the life you save could be mine."

Dean died just five months later on a California highway when his Porsche 550 could not avoid the turning car driven by 23-year-old Donald Turnupseed.

The Safety Council toured Dean's crushed Porsche to further advertise the need for safe driving on the road. And yes, Loehr has a photograph of that display.

Photo albums

The shelves of Loehr's private office are lined with photo albums containing pictures of Dean, and those taken by him. He has become a valued resource for anyone researching the life of the young actor.

"I never expected all this, "Loehr says with a smile. "It started out as a hobby."

Loehr shepherds Dean's memory in the town, providing maps of sights to tourists, and sponsoring several James Dean events throughout the year. On Feb. 5, the Memorial Gallery will sponsor a birthday party for Dean's 70th at the local Lions Club. The bash, open to all, will feature a rockabilly band, dancing, and a dinner. The following day, the Fairmount Historical Museum will sponsor a free screening of Dean's first film, "East of Eden," that will be followed by a reception.

A larger event celebrating Dean's life is held each September and is sponsored by his fan club. (He died Sept. 30, 1955.) The Remember James Dean Festival, scheduled for Sept. 28-30, 2001, will feature a huge car show, a carnival and street fair, a parade, live entertainment and a lookalike contest. Crowds of 30,000 are not unusual at the annual event. *AP*

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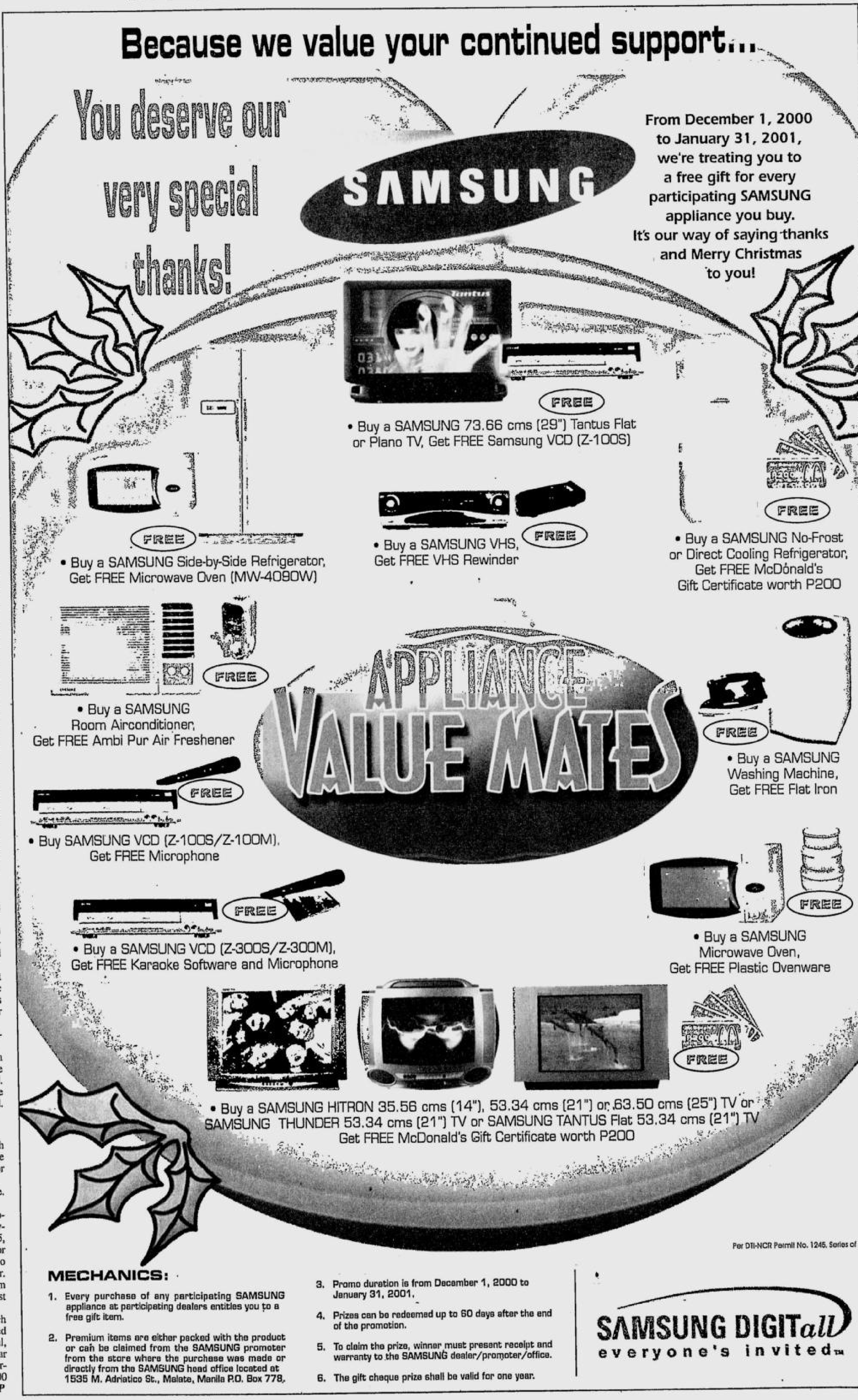
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Martin Nievera starts Crossover Live Tour on Jan. 12

By Edmund L. Sicam

LAST year, Martin Nievera staged a successful live tour to promote the Crossover stations in key cities of the Philippines. Next week, Crossover brings Martin back in another live tour, "Martin Nievera XV3, The Aftershock."

Comedian

The tour blasts off at the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas Convention Hall in Davao City on Jan. 12 and 13 with comedian Jon Santos and Hotlegs as guests. The concert will be carried on 93.1 DZLR-FM.

The tour moves to the Waterfront Hotel in Cebu City on Jan. 20 with guests Vina Morales, Lani Misalucha, Jon Santos and Hotlegs. The show airs on 93.1 DYWF-FM.

Then it's on to the La Salle Coliseum in Bacolod City on Jan. 27 with guests Regine Velasquez, Jon Santos and Hotlegs in a concert to be aired on 99.1 DYBM-FM.

"XV3" hits Manila on Feb. 3 at the Ultra Football Field. Since it's Martin's birthday, surprise guests are expected to perform at the special show, which airs on 105.1 DWBM-FM.

The tour ends on Feb. 10 at the St. Louis University in Baguio City with Jon Santos and Hotlegs as guests. The carrying station is 105.1 DWBM-FM.

Annulment

At a presscon at his dad's Country Waffles in Annapolis st., San Juan, Martin explained that "aftershock" refers to the earthshaking events that happened in the life of the singer last year. That includes the annulment of his marriage to Pops Fernandez, the many successful concerts he had, and the success of his "Forever" album, which he produced to impress his ex-wife.

NIEVERA. Earthshaking events.

Though the affair was held to promote the tour, it was inevitable that someone would ask about Pops, and Martin, who answers any question propounded to him, was glad to oblige. Although he admits he's seeing another woman, Katrina, he says he cannot give 110 percent of his commitment to her. The reason is that he wants his former partner to be happy first and he feels Pops has not found true happiness. Obviously, Martin has not gotten over his relationship with Pops, despite the annulment.

Martin was beaming about his Christmas, which he spent with Pops and their kids. It was Pops who invited him and while previously, he would get only two hours with his sons, he spent five hours with his family on that happy occasion.

Surprise gift

There were no serious discussions, just reminiscences about the happy times. Martin's gift to Pops was a jacket that she had expressed interest in when she visited a store. Martin found this out from his kids and immediately bought it as his surprise gift. Pops was touched by the gesture and Martin reminded her that he used to do that when they were still together.

The year 2001 promises to be another concert-filled year for Martin. There is also the album that he's recording for an American producer, who watched his show at the Bellagio hotel in Las Vegas. He doesn't want to dwell so much on the album, since it hasn't been recorded yet. However, he has signed a contract, so everything indicates that the album will be recorded and distributed internationally.

Last year, Martin waxed a special album of old standards like "Unforgettable," What Kind of Fool Am I," 'Embraceable You." What's special about the album is that you won't find it in record stores. It was Martin's Christmas gift to friends and members of the press. Actually, his uncle wanted Martin to record a CD that he could give away to his friends. Martin thought it was a good idea and produced his own copies as his giveaways.

When will Martin stop talking about Pops at his presscons? We suppose, when the press stops asking him about it or when the public starts complaining that they are sick and tired of hearing Martin-and-Pops stories. Till then, watch out for more developments.

Nerissa captivates more listeners with 'Huwag Naman'

By Remy M. Umerez

A FEW months ago, Nerissa Binoya's self-titled album under Ivory Records was launched. Her carrier single "Hanggang Kailan" gained popularity so fast that she was dubbed as music industry's latest Cinderella because of her humble beginnings and her big break during an amateur contest hosted by Ivory Records and Vicor.

Diminutive

With her mother constantly at her side, Nerissa began making the rounds of amateur singing contests since she was 11.

She shares one unforgettable experience where 100 contestants had to be auditioned and she was no. 78 on the list. By the time her name was called, it was already nine in the morning! From the contest site, she proceeded directly to school. Luckily, she did not go home empty-handed.

BINOYA. Veteran of singing tilts.

Champion

For seven consecutive weeks, Nerissa was champion of "Tawag ng Tanghalan." Sadly, she did not make it to the grand finals.

In 1997, she became the grand champion of "SanlinggoNapo Sila's" Roselle Nava Sing-Alike contest. In 1998, she won top prizes in the Bamboo Organ Song Festival and the PCCR Inter School Song Festival. After years of joining countless singing competitions, Nerissa now has 75 trophies, a mean feat for a sixteen-year-old.

Nerissa can't resist joining whenever a singing tilt is being sponsored.

Last year in May, while spending a day at the mall with her mother, Nerissa chanced upon the Sing Along sa Mall Search for Video King and Queen contest by Vicor and Ivory Records.

Sheer power

With her contest piece, "Isang Lahi," Nerissa held the audience in the palm of her hands and the sheer power of her voice did not escape the interest of Ivory records president Tony Ocampo. He was so impressed that, in the middle of Nerissa's performance, he decided to sign her up for a recording contract. Her ultimate dream of becoming a recording artist has finally come true.

Life's ultimate purpose

LOTUS POND

R. Valencia

TIME is more precious than gold or millions of dollars. We all have it but only a few know how to use it to their advantage.

Passing of time

The end of a year is like the end of a day. It marks the passing of time and wise people realize that there will also be the end of a lifetime. How well we live a lifetime depends on how well we live each year and each day.

The growth of a person is not measured in years but in values and lessons learned.

Time is wasted in overdoing things: overeating, oversleeping, overtalking, overspending and overendeavoring for unnecessary things.

Material wealth cannot buy you more time but wisdom can teach you how to use whatever you have.

How you spend your money is a great responsibility. The same applies to how you spend your time. However, you don't get to do the accounting and auditing yourself. The Supreme Authority takes charge of that!

Spiritual identity

The ultimate purpose of life is to become self-realized and enlightened in the knowledge of one's spiritual identity and relationship with the Supreme Being. Each day as well as each year should bring us closer to this goal, which results in inner peace, happiness and eternal satisfaction.

People gamble and don't only lose their money. They also lose their time and intelligence in the process.

The greatest lives are not necessarily the longest. But they certainly are the bravest, wisest and happiest.

Time is for making changes for the better. Do it now rather than later.

If you pursue spiritual goals now, the fruits will be out of this world.

Choice

We always have a choice. We can either live in this world of time, birth after birth, or live in the world of eternity where there is no birth or death. The last option gives the highest returns.

Intoxication robs people of their health, wealth and time. The more intoxicated people become, the poorer they get.

Happiness in life comes not from forgetting our problems but from finding the solutions.

They write the scripts

By Nestor U. Torre

LAST month, I noted in this section that, of the six Metro Manila Film festival entries, only one film ("Markova, Comfort Gay") bothered to credit its screenwriter in its newspaper ad. I urged the producers of the other movies to do the same in their ads, but there was little positive response to my request.

Feedback

I did get a lot of feedback from scriptwriters, though. They bemoaned producers' blithe neglect of giving credit where credit was due even for an obviously crucial contribution as the script, which film experts regard as second in importance only to direction.

The scriptwriters who reacted also blamed media for giving their contribution short shrift. As a result, they said, the public wasn't aware of the fact that, 99 percent of the time, if there's no script, there can't be a (good) film.

It was time, the writers said, for rectification to be made, and this section could help a lot if it regularly focused on the writing aspect of filmmaking.

Workshoppers

Having written 20 screenplays and countless TV scripts myself, and having taught scores of workshoppers the craft and art of TV-film screenwriting, I naturally agreed to do what I could. Hence this regular feature.

I hope that the situation will improve as we continue to give our screenwriters the attention and interest they so richly deserve. After all, in the beginning *is* the word!

Who or what is a screenwriter, and how important is he to the filmmaking process? Going by the book, the screenwriter is the individual responsible, in total or in part, for writing the various stages of a film script.

Stages

Often, one person may write all the stages, but sometimes several people have a hand in developing the script. In Hollywood, some screenwriters specialize in certain types of subjects or story types, or even certain stages of the script.

As a result, viewers can't be sure who exactly is responsible for many scripts, and until recently,

THEY WRITE/P.D3

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'Mga artista ng bayan' through the years

By Behn Cervantes

THE public record of that *artista* named Erap has given artists a bad name. This is made worse by ill-qualified actors with brazen political ambitions despite the fact that they do not possess the necessary brains, background, training or education.

Consequences

They don't consider the consequences of their ineptitude as public servants on the nation. Since many of them were mediocre performers, their political record is as bad as their performances.

Justifiably, the public has developed a suspicion as well as distaste for *artistas* in general. This is most unfair to the artists who know their role and place in society.

Artists have long been part of the people's movement to liberate the Filipino people from oppression. Most were true to their calling to mirror their turbulent times and society.

They gave voice to people's feelings through poetry, song, music and dance. They painted and sculpted reality, thus giving the people palpable proof of reality, no matter how painful it was.

They spoke and fought for true liberation of body; soul and mind. Therefore, artists worth their salt were part of the fight of the Filipino people against Spanish and American colonization: Rizal, Juan Luna, Balagtas, Julio Nakpil and even the great plebian Andres Bonifacio. Aurelio Tolentino, Juan Matapang Cruz and Severino Reyes used the power of theater to educate and unite the people against the tyrannical foreign powers that suppressed them.

Artists of stage and film participated in propaganda work against the Japanese when the Imperial Army occupied the islands. Valiant *artistas* like Francisco 'Soc' Rodrigo, Lamberto and Daisy Avellana, Narciso Pimentel as well as Pugo and Tugo, Leopoldo Salcedo and Fernando Poe, Sr. risked life and limb as well as the wrath of the Kempetai to bring hope to the Filipinos who flocked to watch them perform in the then inactive moviehouses to escape the harshness of the times.

They went in droves to watch plays and skits and listen to songs that gave the people strength during those trying years.

Throughout our history, writers and poets, musicians and visual artists have been part of the people's struggle. We must remember the glorious example given by valiant artists like Amado V. Hernandez, Atang dela Rama, Sammy Rodriguez and the likes of Eman Lacaba, Lorena Barros and Mer Arce.

Quick development

The First Quester Storm witnessed the quick development of nationalist and liberating forms of people's arts. These new and revived forms of art were born out of exigency, the awakening of the people and the call of the times.

Gintong Silahis, Panday Sining, Kamangyan and other performing groups galvanized radicalized demonstrators at Plaza Miranda, Liwasang Bonifacio and the US Embassy with their call for national liberation through songs, poetry and drama.

Visual artists and musicians created lyrical as well as passionate and militant works to mirror the sounds and sights of the times. They were not necessarily beautiful but they were indeed the voice of a suffering people yearning for true independence after many centuries of oppression.

The imposition of Martial Law did not inhibit artists from continuing their struggle to use the arts to educate and unite the people. Theater once again maximized its effects by resuscitating traditional forms with new messages to update the people on current issues.

Peta and the UP Repertory Company created new plays, songs and poetry to uplift a people often frustrated by national events. The ensuing years of struggle saw a resurgence of nationalist movies that challenged the censorship rules of the military government.

Anti-censorship crusade

The anti-censorship crusade united artists to struggle for freedom of expression. This continuing struggle saw the birth of Free The Artist: Free The Media. Eventually, the movement gave birth to the Concerned Artists of the Philippines.

Times change and conditions often alter alliances but nationalist artists true to their calling are once again rising to meet the demands of the times. It is no wonder then that despite the president's powerful influence over the film and television industries, there are conscience-stricken *artistas* who have bravely come out to join the people's movement to demand the resignation of a fellow actor from the highest office of the land.

(To be concluded)

ARTISTS attend a rally at Liwasang Bonifacio in May, 1983. Standing at top left is Laurice Guillen. Below her are, from left, Fr. Nick Cruz, Philip Salvador, Bembol Roco and the author. Top right is Eddie Romero and below him is Gloria Diaz.

They . . .

(From page D2)

the role of the screenwriter was often ignored even by film reviewers.

"Auteur" criticism, which sees the director as the true creator and therefore "author" of a film, has led to some confusion in this regard.

Progress

But some progress has been made in the last decade. Screenwriters used to get paid quite poorly, but some "star" writers have pushed some movie scriptwriting fees to millions of dollars per film.

In the Philippines, the range appears to be from a pittance of P30,000 to as much as P200,000 for top writers, with P80,000-P100,000 as the median range.

This is an improvement over the hungry days of old, when scriptwriters got P3,000 per film script, but it's still way below what directors get.

Relative importance

Logically, if we consider the relative importance of their work in a film, a screenwriter should get two-thirds of what a director rates. So, if a director is paid P400,000 per film, his scriptwriter should get something like P250,000.

Obviously, we're still a long way from that state of affairs, and sadly, prospects for improvement aren't bright, in the light of the local movie industry's current cost-cutting mood.

The long road to a finished shooting script begins with the optioning or buying of a book or story idea that's described in a brief outline or synopsis. If the project is given the go signal, a writer (or a series of writers) is hired.

Outline

The first step is the "treatment," an outline of the plot and its main developments, principal characters, possible locations, etc. Upon approval, sequentially more detailed versions of the script are written, rewritten and revised anew, until the producer and director are satisfied.

The finished shooting script is important, but it still must be transformed into a film, so it's regarded as the blueprint for the final product. Changes may be made even during shooting.

The best screenwriter is a craftsman who has his individual vision of the movie he's writing, and the skills and artistry to make that vision come vividly to life on the pages of his script.

But he must also know how to work well with the director, producer and other members of the production team, and to practice his craft *in tandem* with theirs.

FDFPI gives breaks to new film talents

By Royce Ervas Ambrocio

(Conclusion)

I completely agree with Manay Marichu Maceda. With the influx of young filmmaking talents, the movie industry will be infused with a new energy and sense of direction. To achieve that goal, the FDFPI is making another small yet important step through its annual scriptwriting contest. For the past four years, the contest has been catering to a variety of script genres but this year the contest committee decided to go for a theme-based contest: Pelikulang Pambata.

Manay Ichu feels strongly about this, saying that, while there are indeed films catering to kids, they are still under-represented in the local film circuit. Unfortunately, unlike the huge turn-out of entries in past contests, this year's theme-based contest attracted only 45 scripts.

Writers complained about unfamiliarity with children's language, which is not really surprising given the fact that they are more comfortable with "adult writing."

Confusion

Also, there seems to be a limiting factor to a theme-based contest as far as plots are concerned. Manay Ichu explained that the confusion is in the misconception that "Pelikulang Pambata" are only films about children and that they should only have children in the cast.

She said, "*Hindi kailangan na mga bata lang ang bumuo sa* cast of characters *o na ito ay tungkol lang sa mga bata. Ang kailangan ay puwede itong mapanood ng mga bata* from age seven, meaning *dapat ay* GP or General Patronage.

"*Maganda ang ganitong may tema sa* contest because it cultivates a neglected aspect of storytelling. And we owe this to our children, our grandchildren and their children. This will be our legacy to them."

Indeed, if all else fails in our campaign to protect children from harmful cinema, the last resort is to produce kid-friendly movies. Manay Ichu hopes that next year's contest will produce more scripts.

Also, as part of her crusade, she has informal talks with movie producers, encouraging them to invest in more wholesome productions and to try their luck with new directors and writers.

Breaks

Giving breaks to new talents seems risky but it might just be the local film industry's saving grace. To do that, the producers can start looking into the files of winning and non-winning scripts at the FDFPI. They have a reading room where scripts can be read by producers and film buffs. The foundation acts as the scriptwriters' agent.

With all these vital activities that its 27-member staff is busy with all year round, FDFPI is sure to continue playing an important role in the local film industry.

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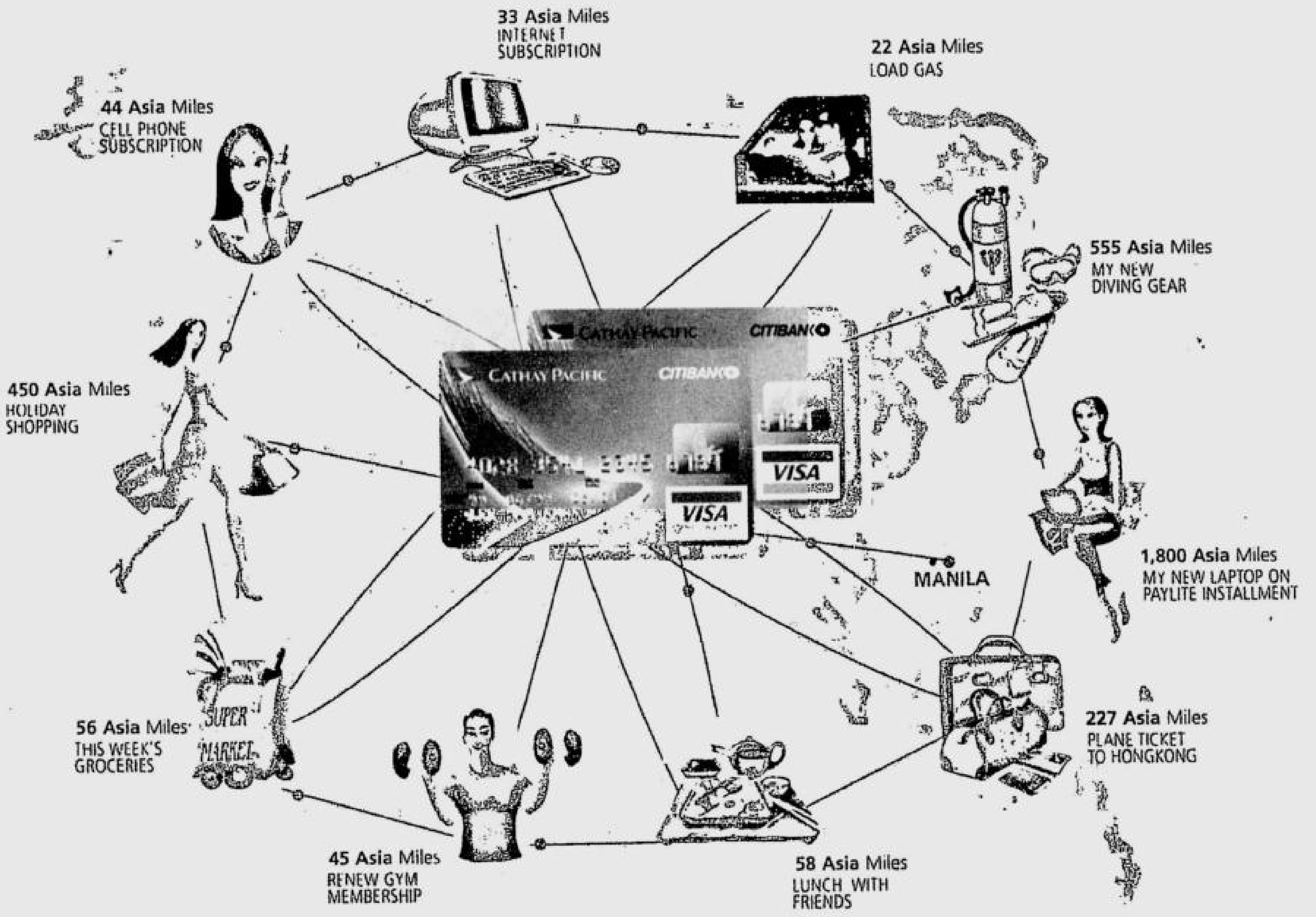

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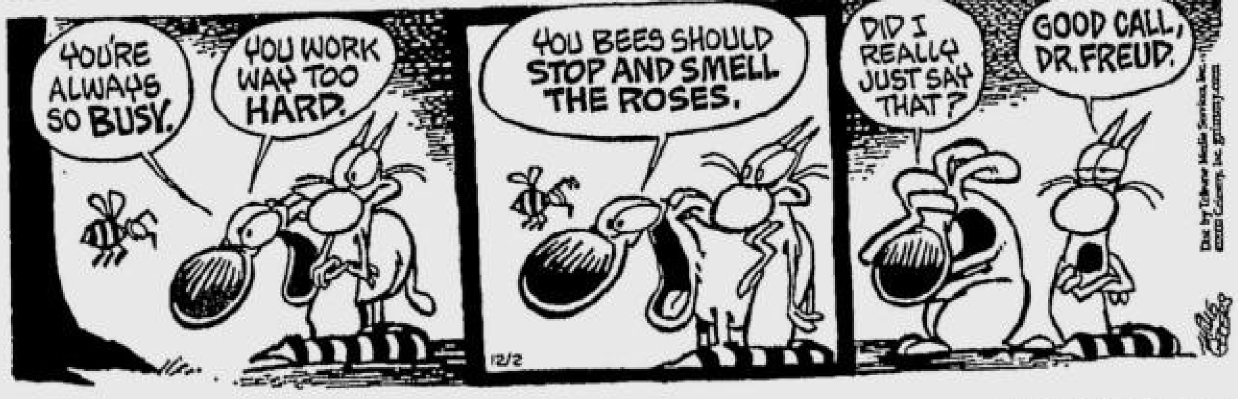
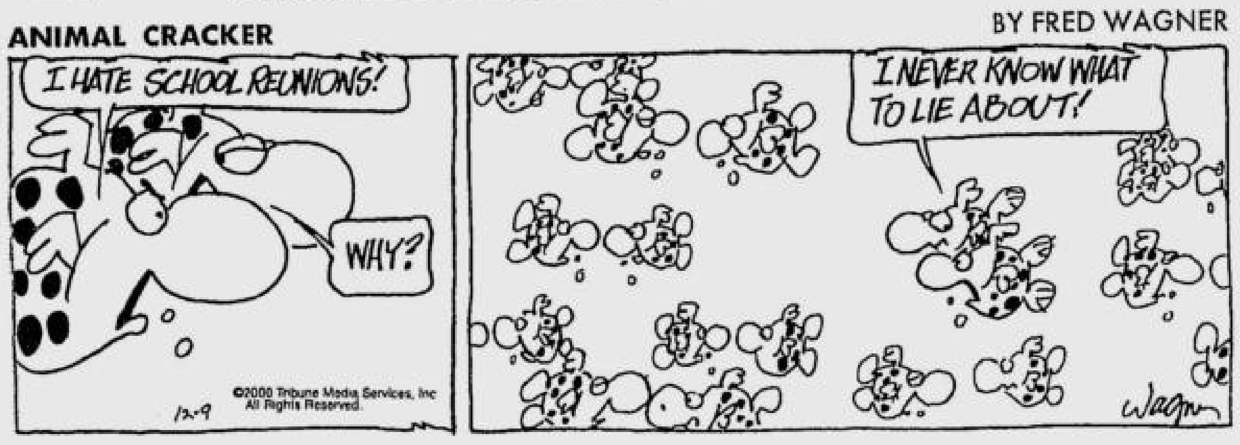
BY MIKE PETERS


YOU'RE ALWAYS SO BUSY.
YOU WORK WAY TOO HARD.
YOU BEES SHOULD STOP AND SMELL THE ROSES.
12/2
DID I REALLY JUST SAY THAT?
GOOD CALL, DR. FREUD.

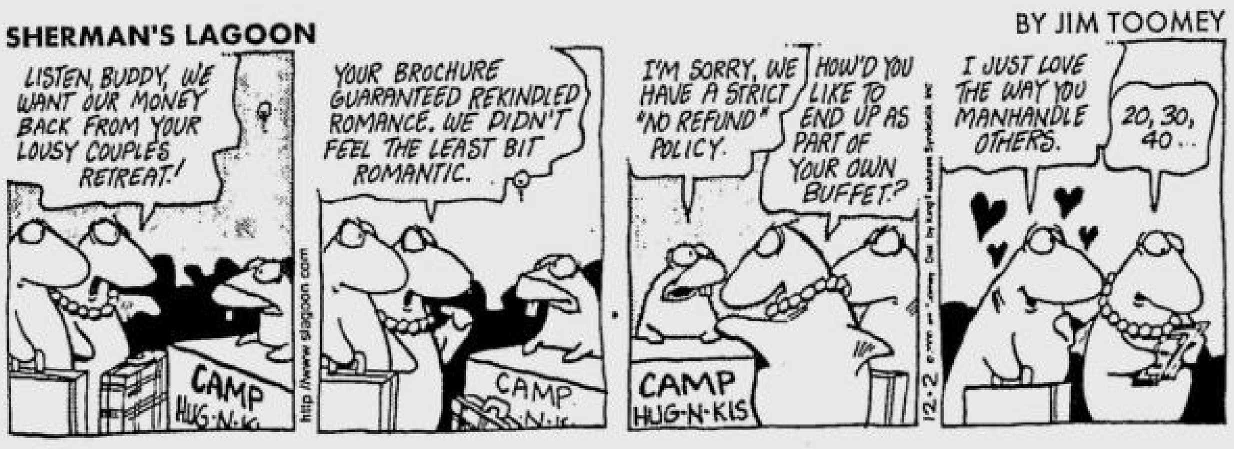
ANIMAL CRACKER

BY FRED WAGNER


I HATE SCHOOL REUNIONS!
WHY?
©2000 Tribune Media Services, Inc All Rights Reserved.
12-9
I NEVER KNOW WHAT TO LIE ABOUT!
Wagner

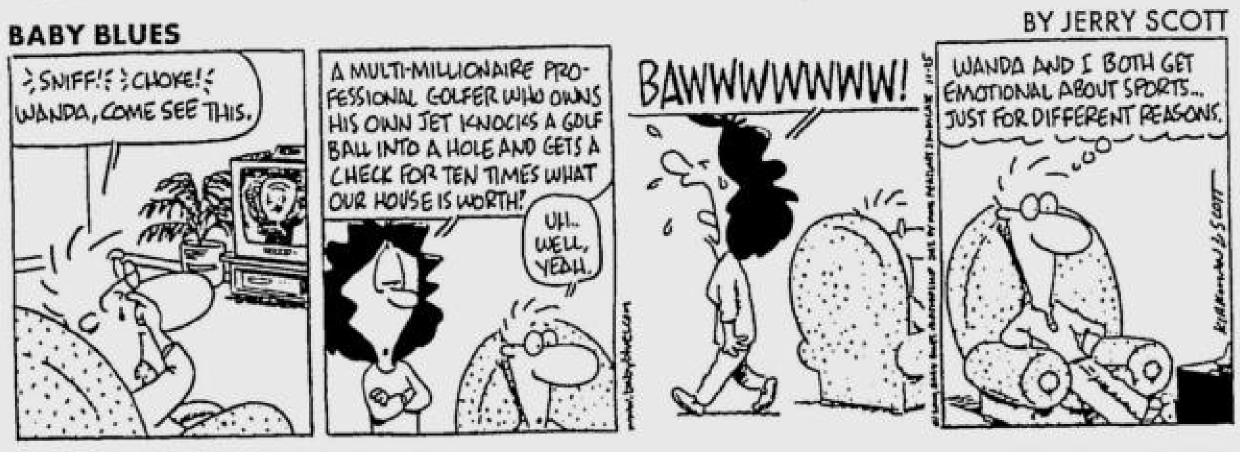
SHERMAN'S LAGOON

BY JIM TOOMEY


LISTEN, BUDDY, WE WANT OUR MONEY BACK FROM YOUR LOUSY COUPLES RETREAT!
CAMP HUG-N-K
http://www.slagoon.com
YOUR BROCHURE GUARANTEED REKINDLED ROMANCE. WE DIDN'T FEEL THE LEAST BIT ROMANTIC.
CAMP
I'M SORRY, WE HAVE A STRICT "NO REFUND" POLICY.
HOW'D YOU LIKE TO END UP AS PART OF YOUR OWN BUFFET?
CAMP HUG-N-KIS
12-2
I JUST LOVE THE WAY YOU MANHANDLE OTHERS.
20, 30, 40...

BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT


SNIFF! CHOKE! WANDA, COME SEE THIS.
A MULTI-MILLIONAIRE PROFESSIONAL GOLFER WHO OWNS HIS OWN JET KNOCKS A GOLF BALL INTO A HOLE AND GETS A CHECK FOR TEN TIMES WHAT OUR HOUSE IS WORTH!
UH.. WELL, YEAH.
BAWWWWWWW!
WANDA AND I BOTH GET EMOTIONAL ABOUT SPORTS... JUST FOR DIFFERENT REASONS.

HOROSCOPE

BY EUGENIA LAST

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Loretta Young, Danny Thomas, Joey Lauren Adams, Malcolm Young, Nancy Lopez Knight, Rowan Atkinson

Happy Birthday: You'll have plenty of opportunities, but don't overload your plate or you'll fall short of your expectations. Your ability to organize and supply detail will add a unique touch to your work. Be prepared to welcome change, regardless of how you feel about it. The result will be in your favor as long as you are accepting. Your numbers: 3, 8, 23, 27, 36, 44

ARIES (March 21-April 19): Do things with children, and you will feel a great satisfaction. Your ability to relate to those younger or older will be an asset in family interactions.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): Go through your personal papers. You may need to make changes because you have overlooked an important clause that is no longer to your benefit.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): Your professional obligations may alarm and upset your loved ones if they feel that the stress you are under could make you ill.

CANCER (June 21-July 22): You may want to avoid family functions today. You are likely to be ridiculed for your actions. Confusion may lead to difficulties while traveling.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): Look into social activities that will bring you in contact with large groups. You may meet someone at sports events who could be very special to you in the future.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): Don't count on family members to understand you. Your ideas may not fit the standards of others, but you have to follow your own heart and needs.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): Listen to someone you trust, whose advice will help you solve your problems and make you feel more at ease about your personal and professional problems.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): Help those less fortunate. You may want to volunteer your time to a group you believe in. New romantic connections can be made while assisting those in need.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): You may not know what to do next. Take time to reflect on your past experiences before you make any final decisions regarding your love life.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): Anger and upset will result if you haven't been yourself lately. Your partner may be confused, and you will have to clear matters up if you wish to avoid opposition.

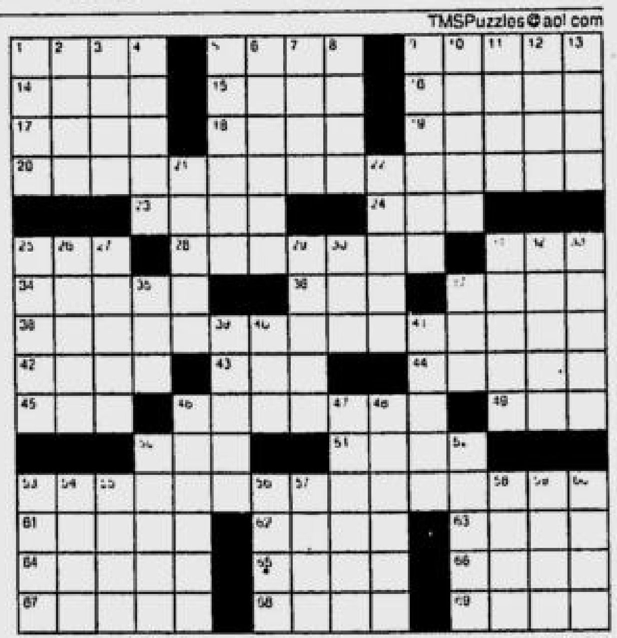
AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): You can help others if you take the time to talk about their situation, but don't offer to pay for their mistakes or take care of their responsibilities.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): You may want to rest up. You have not been yourself lately, and your work has been reflecting it. You need to concentrate on doing the best you can. A change of attitude may be in order.

Birthday Baby: You will work hard for what you acquire. The more experience you get, the further you'll go. You will never let obstacles stand in your way. You will always fight for your rights.

DAILY CROSSWORD

TMSPuzzles@aol.com



By Gregory E. Paul
Scottdale, PA

11/23/00

ACROSS
1 Mingo on "Daniel Boone"
5 Turkey-label letters
9 Map book
14 Light, happy tune
15 Macy's Parade spoiler
16 Semiconductor
17 Small combo
18 Blood formation
19 "Jump" group, Van __
20 With 38A, route to grandma's house
23 Disfigure
24 Gay '90s, e.g.
25 Create lace
28 Catch
31 Dallas sch.
34 Cake coverage
36 Ship letters
37 Applaud
38 See 20A
42 Look lasciviously
43 Break fast?
44 Hold dear
45 19th letter
46 Aphid eater
49 Preferred one
50 Musical gift
51 Melville's sequel to "Typee"
53 Time to talk turkey?
61 Waste maker?
62 Largest landmass
63 Bean town?
64 Change
65 Submerged
66 Bad to the bone
67 Rips
68 Garden tools
69 Miami's county

DOWN
1 Choir voice
2 Kind of ICBM
3 Nobelist Wiesel
4 Sportscaster Hannah
5 Needy youngster
6 Stephen King novel, "__ Lot"
7 Fashionable Christian
8 One opposed
9 Stick
10 Queenly headgear
11 The Kinks 1970 hit
12 Middle Eastern gulf
13 Transmit
21 South Korean city
22 Poem
25 Sir or lord, e.g.
26 Dull pains
27 Wearies
29 Bonkers
30 Light gray
31 Beach Boys hit, "__ John B"
32 Sierra __ Mountains
33 Unlikely win
35 ... __ a lender be
37 $-due mail
39 Cogwheels
40 Possessed
41 Conestoga
46 NBA team
47 Thickheaded
48 Eskimo boats
50 Join in
52 Gave the eye
53 Be __ as it may...
54 Healthy
55 Nick and Nora's pooch
56 Deep cut
57 Japanese golfer Aoki
58 Opera star
59 Surrounded by
60 Lock maker

PREVIOUS PUZZLE ANSWER

A	B	A	S	H	■	A	D	S	■	S	C	A	R	F
T	O	N	T	O	■	D	O	T	■	H	A	N	O	I
M	I	T	E	S	■	O	R	E	■	I	T	E	M	S
S	L	I	P	P	E	R	Y	W	H	E	N	W	E	T
■	■	■	■	I	N	N	■	■	A	R	A	■	■	■
B	E	S	E	T	S	■	L	A	S	■	P	S	A	T
E	L	E	N	A	■	C	E	N	T	S	■	E	P	I
S	I	N	G	L	E	L	A	N	E	A	H	E	A	D
O	S	S	■	S	L	O	P	S	■	N	O	T	R	E
T	E	E	D	■	D	D	S	■	I	D	I	O	T	S
■	■	■	A	D	E	■	■	E	N	D	■	■	■	■
D	A	N	G	E	R	O	U	S	C	U	R	V	E	S
I	M	A	G	E	■	D	R	S	■	N	A	I	V	E
P	A	P	E	R	■	O	D	E	■	E	M	C	E	E
S	H	A	R	E	■	R	U	N	■	S	P	E	N	D

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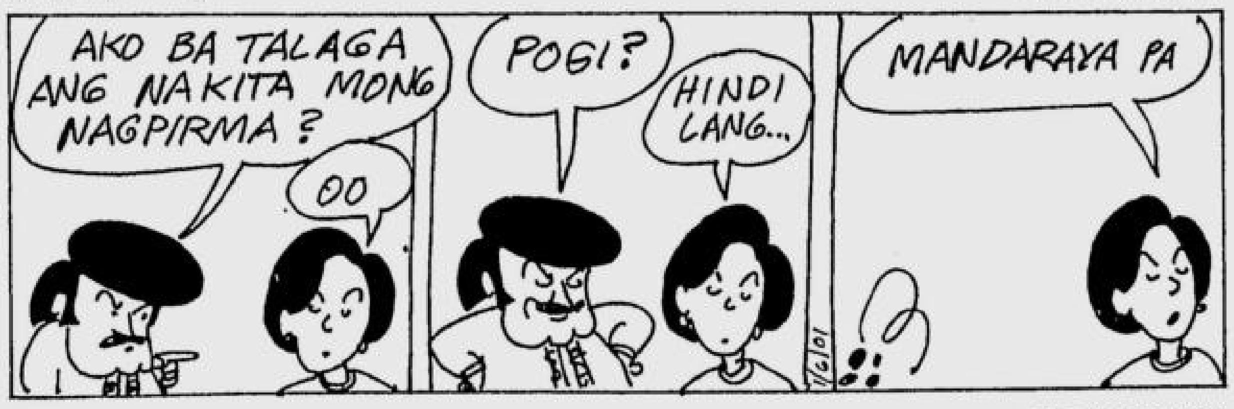
11/23/00

ANSWER ON MONDAY

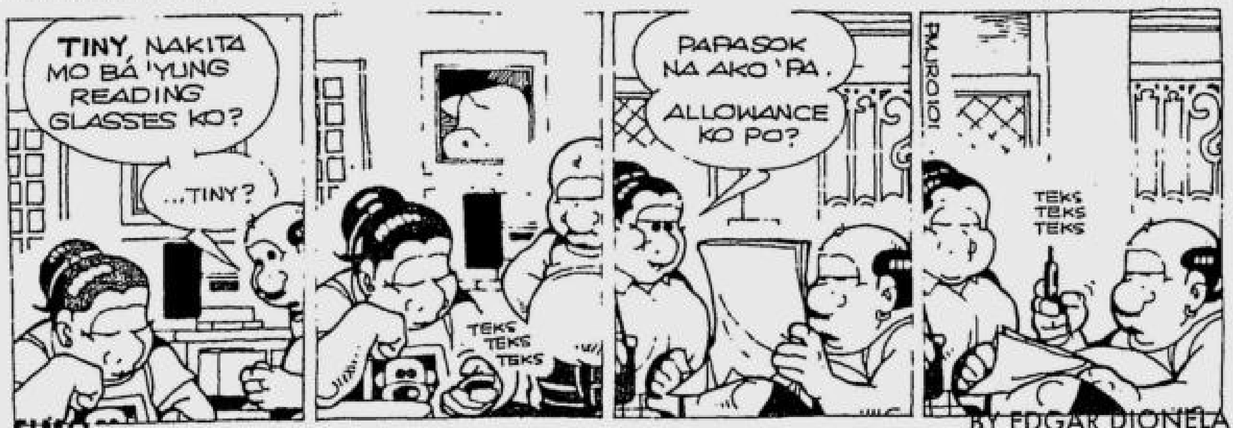
A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA


AKO BA TALAGA ANG NAKITA MONG NAGPIRMA?
OO
POGI?
HINDI LANG...
1/6/01
MANDARAYA PA

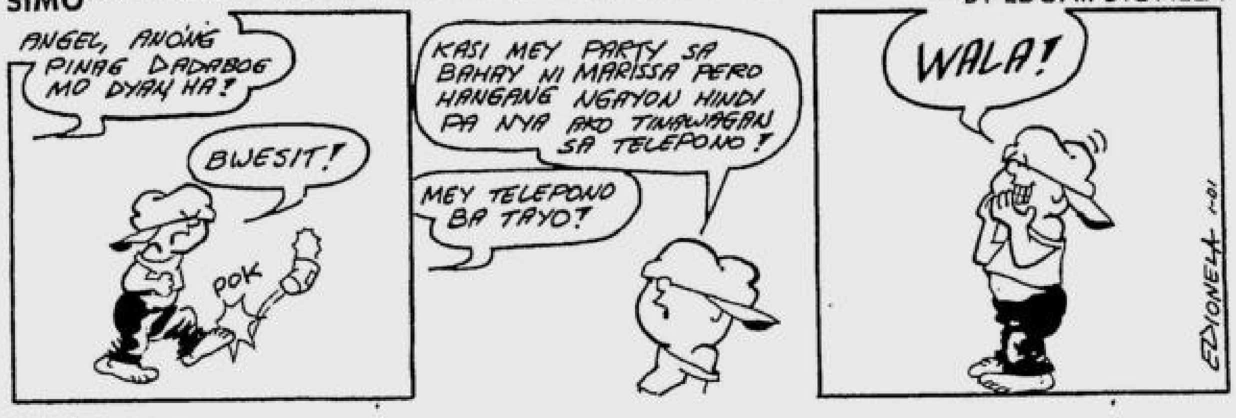
PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR


TINY, NAKITA MO BÁ 'YUNG READING GLASSES KO?
...TINY?
TEKS TEKS TEKS
PAPASOK NA AKO 'PA.
ALLOWANCE KO PO?
PMJR0101
TEKS TEKS TEKS

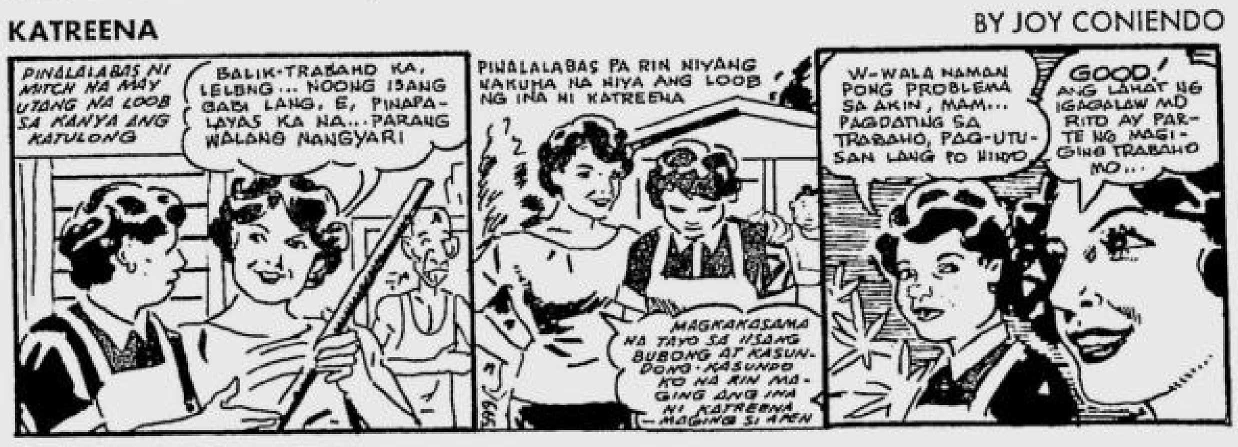
SIMO

BY EDGAR DIONELA


ANGEL, ANONG PINAG DADABOG MO DYAN HA?
BWESIT!
POK
KASI MEY PARTY SA BAHAY NI MARISSA PERO HANGANG NGAYON HINDI PA NYA AKO TINAWAGAN SA TELEPONO!
MEY TELEPONO BA TAYO?
WALA!
EDIONELA 1-01

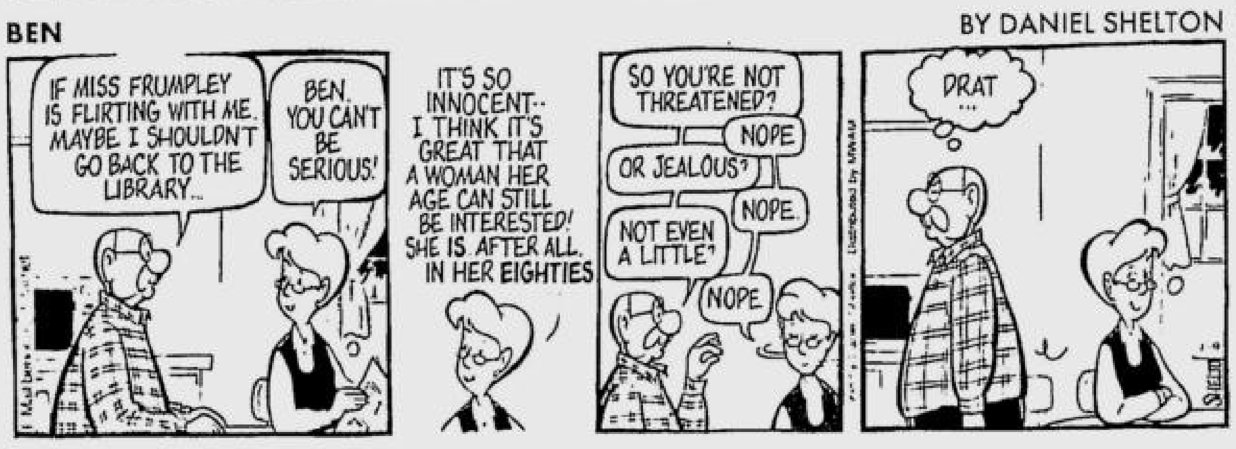
KATREENA

BY JOY CONIENDO


PINALALABAS NI MITCH NA MAY UTANG NA LOOB SA KANYA ANG KATULONG
BALIK-TRABAHO KA, LELONG... NOONG ISANG GABI LANG, E, PINAPALAYAS KA NA... PARANG WALANG NANGYARI
PINALALABAS PA RIN NIYANG NAKUHA NA NIYA ANG LOOB NG INA NI KATREENA
MAGKAKASAMA NA TAYO SA IISANG BUBONG AT KASUNDONG-KASUNDO KO NA RIN MAGING ANG INA NI KATREENA —MAGING SI APEN
W-WALA NAMAN PONG PROBLEMA SA AKIN, MAM... PAGDATING SA TRABAHO, PAG-UTUSAN LANG PO NINYO
GOOD! ANG LAHAT NG IGAGALAW MO RITO AY PARTE NG MAGIGING TRABAHO MO...

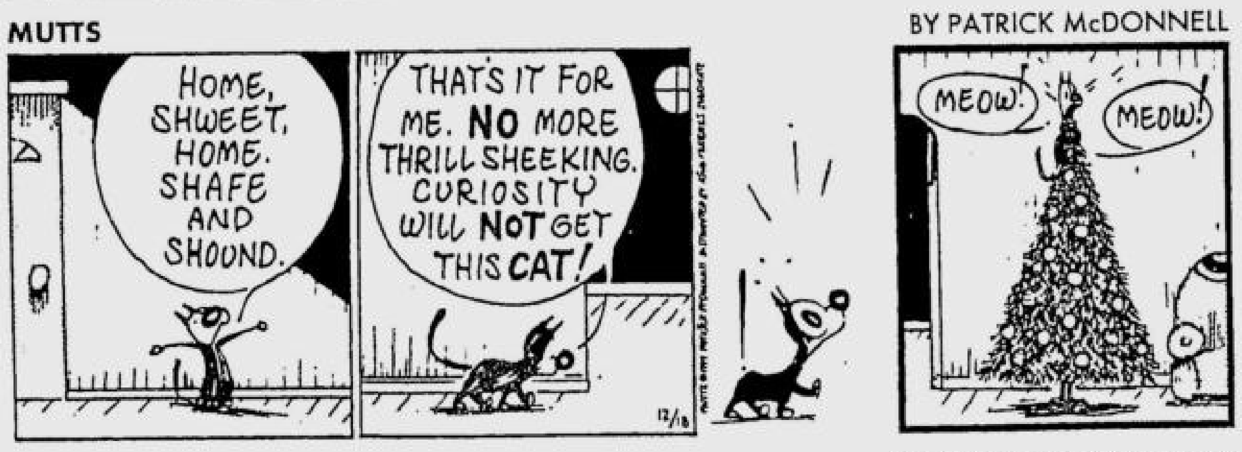
BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON


IF MISS FRUMPLEY IS FLIRTING WITH ME, MAYBE I SHOULDN'T GO BACK TO THE LIBRARY...
BEN, YOU CAN'T BE SERIOUS!
IT'S SO INNOCENT-- I THINK IT'S GREAT THAT A WOMAN HER AGE CAN STILL BE INTERESTED! SHE IS, AFTER ALL, IN HER EIGHTIES
SO YOU'RE NOT THREATENED?
NOPE
OR JEALOUS?
NOPE.
NOT EVEN A LITTLE?
NOPE.
DRAT...

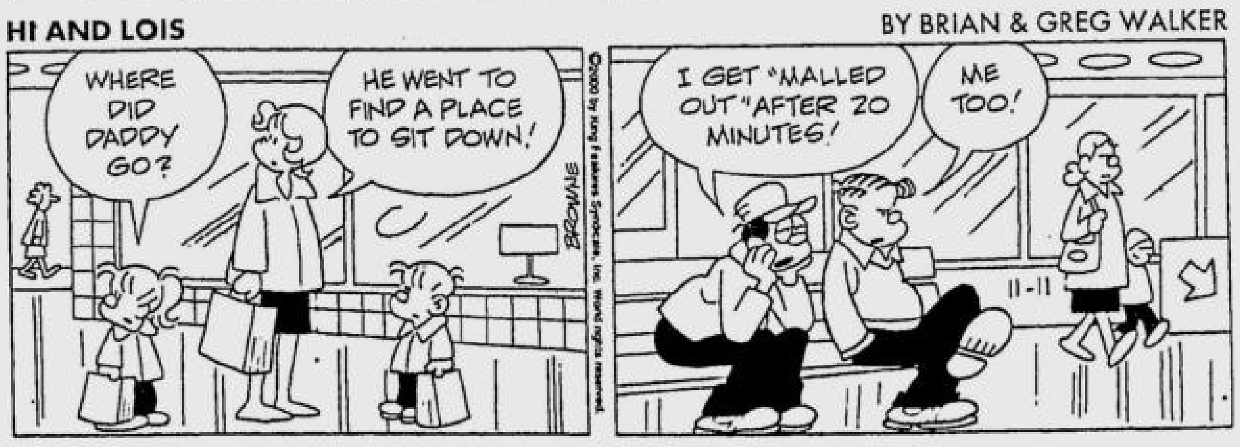
MUTTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL


HOME, SHWEET, HOME. SHAFE AND SHOUND.
THAT'S IT FOR ME. NO MORE THRILL SHEEKING. CURIOSITY WILL NOT GET THIS CAT!
12/18
MEOW!
MEOW!

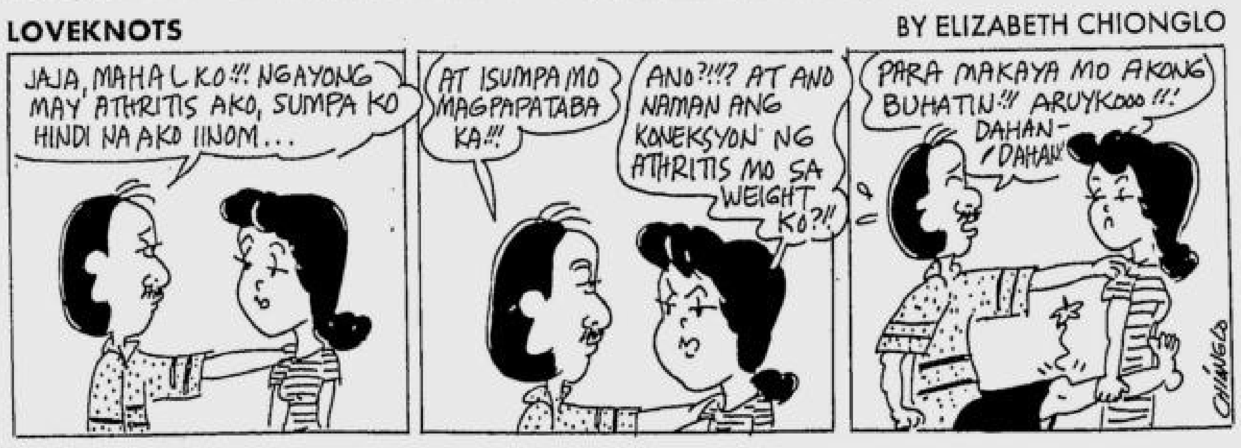
HI AND LOIS

BY BRIAN & GREG WALKER


WHERE DID DADDY GO?
HE WENT TO FIND A PLACE TO SIT DOWN!
BROWNE
I GET "MALLED OUT" AFTER 20 MINUTES!
ME TOO!
11-11

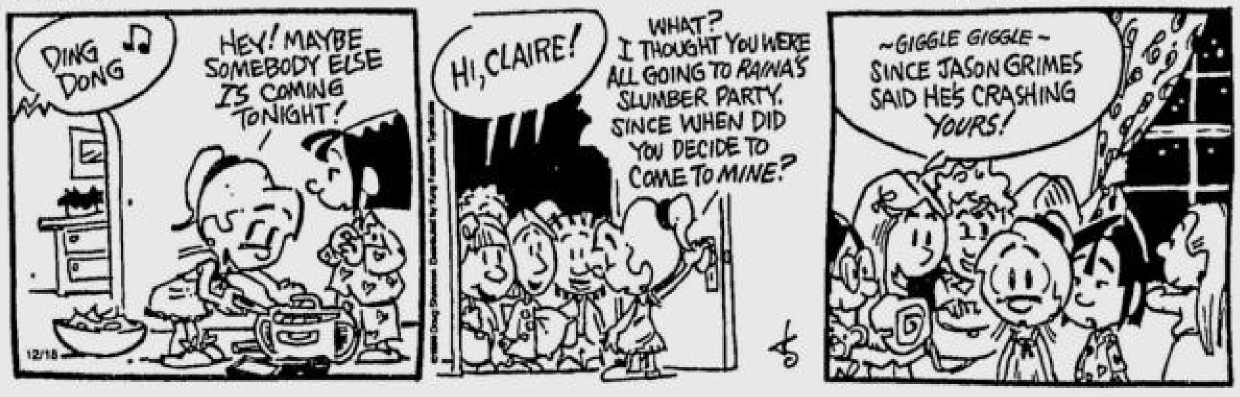
LOVEKNOTS

BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


JAJA, MAHAL KO!!! NGAYONG MAY ATHRITIS AKO, SUMPA KO HINDI NA AKO IINOM...
AT ISUMPA MO MAGPAPATABA KA!!!
ANO?!!? AT ANO NAMAN ANG KONEKSYON NG ATHRITIS MO SA WEIGHT KO?!!
PARA MAKAYA MO AKONG BUHATIN!!! ARUYKOOO!!!
DAHAN-DAHAN
CHIONGLO

CLAIRE

BY DOUG SHANNON


DING DONG
HEY! MAYBE SOMEBODY ELSE IS COMING TONIGHT!
12/18
HI, CLAIRE!
WHAT? I THOUGHT YOU WERE ALL GOING TO RAINA'S SLUMBER PARTY. SINCE WHEN DID YOU DECIDE TO COME TO MINE?
~GIGGLE GIGGLE~ SINCE JASON GRIMES SAID HE'S CRASHING YOURS!

SMART Money
5677 5100 0001 6105
09/00-03/01
SMART COMMUNICATIONS
MasterCard Electronic
SMART
Load it up. Live it up.

I just received my first paycheck and all the stores are calling my name. I'm so excited I forgot to reload my celfone, not to mention my wallet, too. But no more jampacked ATMs for me. I've finally figured out a better way to shop.

SMART Money

"With SMART Money, I can reload my SMART celfone and shop all I want even without cash."

Now I can walk into any store without cash and still buy what I want. All I need is my SMART Money and my SMART celfone. From the convenience of my celfone, I just load my SMART Money Card through SMART Mobile Banking or at any SMART Money loading center, and I'm ready. Aside from loading call and text credits to my SMART Buddy, I can also use it to make purchases in stores that don't normally accept credit cards like tiangges, fastfood chains and beauty shops. Not to mention all MasterCard Electronic establishments nationwide.

All I need to know about my SMART Money

SMART Money

why should I get one?

because I want a cash card that lets me reload my celfone and shop from anywhere, hassle-free!

With SMART Money, you can conveniently reload your SMART Buddy celfone airtime & text credits & even shop for whatever you want with just a few clicks on your celfone.

because I don't want to stand in line for cash.

No ATMs needed. Your money comes to you. Using your celfone, you can transfer cash from your mobile bank account right into your SMART Money.

because I need total security.

Your actual cash is secured by the SMART Money system that complies with MasterCard standards. You might lose your card, but never your money.

because I control my spending.

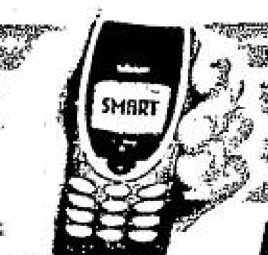
Know exactly where your money goes. With SMART Money and your celfone, you can monitor your card balance and track your purchases.

because I want to shop anywhere.

Use your SMART Money in places that don't accept credit cards and in all MasterCard Electronic establishments nationwide.

because I want to have fun.

Now, you can shop in bazaars, play in arcades & watch your favorite movies with SMART Money!

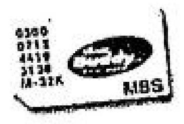


how do I get my SMART Money?

Both the SMART Money SIM and cash card come free with the purchase of a new SMART celfone kit.

If you're already a SMART GSM subscriber, you can check if your SIM card supports SMART Money.

Just look for this MBS marking at the back of the SIM:



If you already have an MBS SIM, simply fill out the SMART Money info sheet at any SMART Telecenter and get your SMART Money Card for FREE.

For all other GSM subscribers, you can get the SMART Money Card free when you upgrade to a SMART MBS SIM Card for only P990. Simply look for this package at any authorized SMART dealer:

SMART Money works with a phase 2 plus celfone. To find out whether your handset is a phase 2 plus celfone, just call SMART Money Hotline at 845-7777, visit any SMART Telecenter or click the SMART website at www.smart.com.ph.

NO NEED TO APPLY!

SMART Money's unique celfone and cash card linkage lets you enjoy all these with just a few clicks from your SMART celfone! It's simply the most convenient way to pay!

SMART Money

how do I use my SMART Money?

TO ENJOY YOUR SMART MONEY FOLLOW THESE SIMPLE STEPS:

How do I activate my cash card?

step 1
Go to SMART MENU and select SMART MONEY.

step 2
Key in your 12-digit MCOM number found on your SMART Money card and press OK.

step 3
Key in your default W-PIN (123456) and press OK.

step 4
You will receive a confirmation message and be advised to change your W-PIN to protect your SMART Money.

How do I load cash into my SMART Money?

To reload over the counter:

step 1
You can put any amount in your SMART Money card through SMART Money Loading Centers.

step 2
Upon receiving cash, the cashier swipes your card and gives you a transaction record.

step 3
Now your SMART Money is loaded and you're ready to go! For maximum reloading convenience, use your celfone to load cash in your SMART Money card straight from your Mobile Bank Account.

How do I load airtime and text credits on my SMART Buddy celfone?

step 1
Go to the SMART MENU and select SMART BUDDY.

step 2
Select RELOAD and press OK.

step 3
If you want to reload your own SMART Buddy celfone, select MY BUDDY and press OK. If you want to reload another celfone, select OTHERS, key in the recipient's SMART Buddy celfone number and press OK.

step 4
Key in your W-PIN and press OK.

step 5
You and the recipient will receive a text message confirming the amount successfully loaded.

how do I make a purchase?

Your card must be activated and loaded with cash value before it can be used to purchase goods and services. Simply present your SMART Money to the cashier. The cashier swipes your SMART Money and you'll receive a sales slip. Sign it, and you're off!

For deliveries, simply call the store, place your orders and give your MCOM number. You'll then receive a text message to confirm your purchase. Authorize your transaction with your W-PIN and you're done!

SMART Money

Mobile Banking + SMART Money. The future of payment.

Enjoy the full convenience of SMART Money with SMART's Mobile Banking service. When your SMART Money card is supported by SMART Mobile Banking, you can load cash value into your SMART Money—right from your celfone! It's like having your own personal ATM—anytime, anywhere!

how do I load SMART Money thru SMART Mobile Banking?

You have to be a registered Mobile Banking depositor of any of the member banks in the SMART Mobile Banking Service.

1. Using a SMART GSM celfone, go to SMART Menu and select SMART Money.
2. Click Reload.
3. Choose an amount.
4. Key-in the M-PIN code of your Mobile Bank account.
5. You will receive a text confirmation and you're done!

The SMART Mobile Banking Service members are: 1st e-Bank, Dao Heng Bank, East West Bank, Equitable-PCI Bank, Export & Industry Bank, Global Bank, International Exchange Bank, Metrobank, Planters Development Bank, Premiere Development Bank and Union Bank.

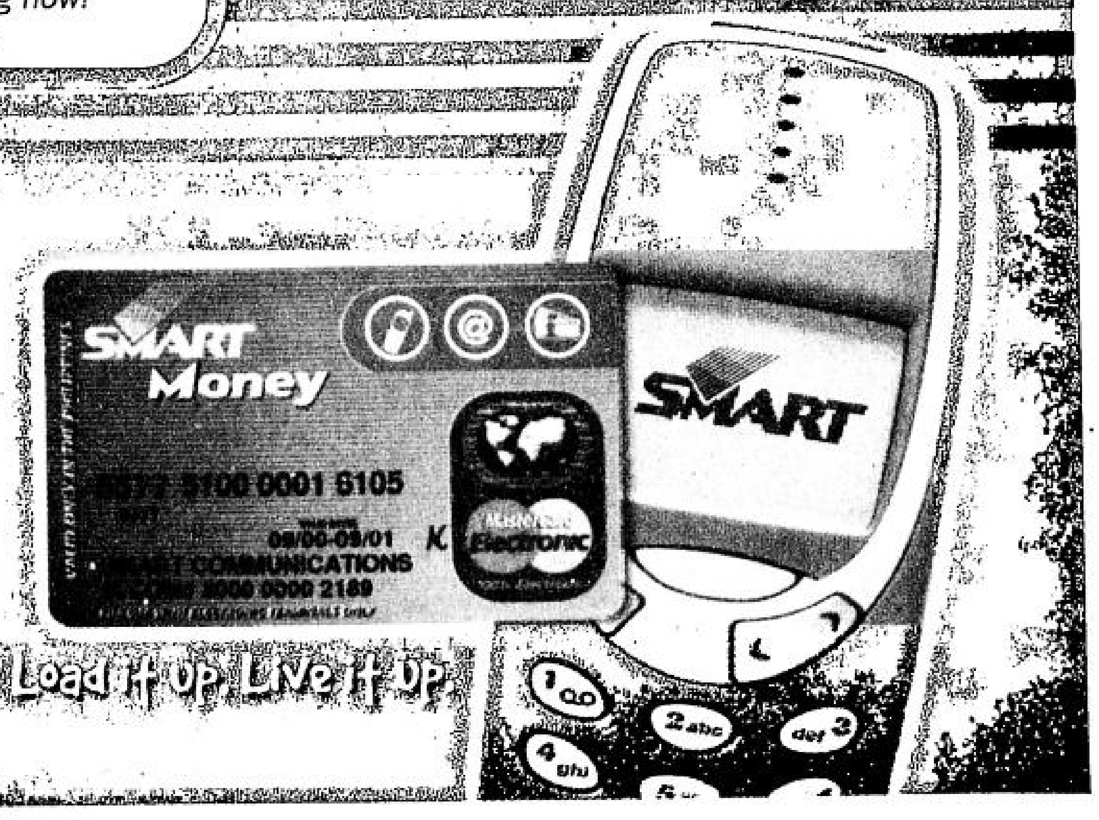
Ask your bank about Mobile Banking for SMART Money reloading now!

Get the most out of your SMART Money SIM card!

YOUR OWN VIRTUAL PET
You will never shop alone again. With your new SMART Money SIM comes your own virtual pet that you can take everywhere!

MORE SURPRISES
Personalize your SMART Money Card & you can join the Rewards Program. Earn points and exchange these for prepaid airtime, text credits & more!

Grab your SMART Money now!
For more information, call SMART Money hotline at 845-7777 or visit our website at www.smart.com.ph.



Primer on computer animation for TV and film

IN "Who Framed Roger Rabbit," computer-generated images were integrated with actors within the same frame.

BY NESTOR U. TORRE

AT A recent TV-film seminar, quite a number of questions were asked about computer animation. I take this as a good sign because the film world is moving rapidly in that direction, and young Filipino moviemakers and TV people should keep pace with this development.

Natural aptitude

If they do, they should do better than most because of their natural aptitude for visual artistry, as proven by the fact that quite a number of Filipino animators have been hired by foreign production companies to work on projects here and abroad. For interested talents, here's the lay of the land:

Using the computer for film animation is less expensive, faster and more versatile than traditional methods. Computer animation for film usually begins when objects—two dimensional drawings, images on film or the three-dimensional objects themselves—are scanned into the computer's memory by means of a digital code.

Software program

Individual images may be conceived from scratch by means of a software program, or drawn directly into the computer through a digitizing table and pen, or some such instrument.

"Modeling" begins with the use of "primitives"—cubes, spheres or cones that are manipulated in shape and form, as well as assembled together.

"Texture mapping" imposes a two-dimensional surface over a three-dimensional object or frame.

Data

"Image processing" can enhance or alter image elements.

Data for a scene, including information for perspective and dimensions, lighting and camera movement, are also fed into the computer.

"Rendering" then transforms the digital information into images.

A series of images can be placed rapidly on videotape or film by means of an output device—like a cathode-ray tube (CRT), lasers or a charge-couple device (CCD).

Pixels

"Raster" graphics are made of picture elements (pixels)—tiny dots of color activated by electronic lines scans called rasters—which create images of striking color.

Computer images are now of sufficiently high resolution and quality that they can be recorded directly on film for inclusion in a live-action movie.

In cartoon animation, computers can color drawings, create backgrounds and even do "in-between" images after the animator scans and programs in the key drawings.

A programmed three-dimensional action can itself be printed onto an animation cell as a two-dimensional cartoon image.

Settings

For "Who Framed Roger Rabbit" (1988), computer-generated settings and forms were used with actual settings and characters, creating a world that integrates what appears to be traditional hand-drawn cartoon imagery into the everyday world.

"Hunchback of Notre Dame" (1996) features spectacular animation and computer-generated imagery. And Pixar Animation studios and the Walt Disney Company opened a new page in digital imagery and cartoon animation with "Toy Story" (1995), the first film in which all the images were created with computers.

Imagination

The question is whether this technology will add to the dehumanization of movies, or instead expand our imagination and sensibilities.

How can Filipino talents take this abstract information and translate it into actual computer-generated animated movies and TV shows. Local pioneers in the field agree that some formal as well as hands-on training is helpful, since learning the complicated process by yourself can lead to frustration.

Occasional workshops in various aspects of animation are announced in the papers. Join one such workshop and develop contacts that can lead to follow-up courses and information on trainee programs or actual job opportunities in the field.

Determination

Depending on your talent, determination and resourcefulness, you can eventually find yourself working in computer animation either here or abroad. Of course, everyone's ultimate dream is to come up with a locally-originated animated feature that will be a hit both here and overseas.

With all of the Filipino animation talents working or being trained all over the place, the realization of this dream appears to be only a matter of time!

TWO FOR THE SHOW

Chico and Delamar agree to disagree

BY MARY ANN A. BAUTISTA
ANDRICKY T. GALLARDO

CHICO and Delamar's fans want them to fight even more.

THE TANDEM of Chico and Delamar has come out with their second album under MCA-Universal Records with the carrier single, "Friends for Life."

They didn't really like each other in the beginning, and they often argue. Even when they have a spat, however, they still manage to do their radio show, "Rush Hour" (on 93.9 DWKC).

Delamar dislikes Chico's superstitious nature. Chico hates it when Delamar psychoanalyzes him.

"We disagree on the air but our listeners complain that we don't fight often enough," Chico sighs. "There has to be a healthy distance."

"You should be sensitive enough to read what's bothering your friend. Compliment and reassure your friend. Remember that people change. They fall in love, get married and develop other interests. Don't let yourselves drift apart because of those changes," Delamar counters.

"Don't be afraid of fights. Sometimes the most lasting friendships are those that have gone through the worst fights. Friendship is tested that way," Chico adds.

"Hey, but don't keep a scoreboard. You never see when you're acting immature. Friends should put up with each other," Delamar interjects.

It's evident that Chico and Delamar have had their share of fights and have managed to let certain things slide by. Chico influenced Delamar to take Chinese herbs and have regular acupuncture sessions. Delamar has influenced Chico to listen to techno and electronic music. Chico is a vegetarian and Delamar likes chicken. But they both admit that they have healthy appetites.

Entertainment's best

Show Biz Year 2000 was ushered in with a lot of hopeful anticipation that things would somehow improve for the entertainment industry since an X-factor was on his second year in office as the chief executive of the country. A lot of good intentions and a few grandiose plans were hatched but the X-factor has since then been burnt several times with some really bad moves. As the snake slowly crawls into our midst, we recall the ground-breaking achievements of the entertainment business in the year that was.

Here is our best of the best list, in no particular order:

Outstanding (commercially shown) films and directors of the year

1. "Bayaning Third World," Mike de Leon
2. "Yakapin Mo Ang Umaga," Jose Javier Reyes
3. "Azucena," Carlitos Siguion-Reyna
4. "Biyaheng Langit," Tikoy Aguiluz
5. "Pangarap ng Puso," Mario O'Hara
6. "Laro sa Baga," Chito Roño
7. "Lagarista," Mel Chionglo
8. "Bukas na Lang Kita Mamahalin," Jose Javier Reyes
9. "Deathrow," Joel Lamangan
10. "Sugatang Puso," Jose Javier Reyes
11. "Tanging Yaman," Laurice Guillen
12. "Abandonada," Joel Lamangan

Outstanding lead performances (male)

1. Dante Rivero, "Azucena"
2. Mark Anthony Fernandez, "Biyaheng Langit"
3. Carlos Morales, "Laro sa Baga"
4. Ricky Davao, "Bayaning Third World"
5. Cris Villanueva, "Bayaning Third World"
6. Cogie Domingo, "Yakapin Mo Ang Umaga"
7. Ricky Davao, Azucena"
8. Eddie Garcia, "Deathrow"
9. Patrick Garcia, "Sugatang Puso"
10. Dolphy, "Markova"
11. Piolo Pascual, "Lagarista"
12. Cogie Domingo, "Deathrow"

(To be concluded)

New beginnings

FACE TO FACE

Inday Badiday

THERE'S something about a New Year that brings fresh hope to tired spirits.

As the clock struck 12 last Monday, a lot of lives were reassessed and new resolutions were enlisted and re-listed.

Changes in all aspects of our lives are once again expected as 2001 unreels-- hopefully for the better (although there's really no guarantee).

Sometimes, however, it's hard to move forward when you continue to hold on to things that pin you down.

Triumphs

Like relationships, for example. Undeniably, all aspects of our lives are affected by other people whose lives are closely intertwined with ours. They are the people who share our triumphs, heartaches, frustrations and mini-victories. But what if these relationships have become the very things that stunt our growth?

They say the saddest word in the dictionary is "goodbye." As I look back at 2000, I realize that there are some things I just have to let go of for me to make some headway this year. It will hurt me, it will make me bleed, but I have to.

Funny, but 2000 started as a great year for me. Professionally, there was my radio show, this column and my new talk show that promised brighter things. My personal life was also a source of renewed joy, what with improved relationships with family and peers.

But towards the end of the year, things happened that forced me to take a hard look at my life. Sure, it wasn't that bad. But it could've been better, not only for me but also for others. People whom I relied on failed to deliver for one reason or another. The dreams that I so beautifully conceived turned out stillborn.

Once again, I was lost in the middle of a crossroads, my life falling apart even as I was just trying to piece it whole. At this point, my only recourse was to cry, "Lord, why now? And why me?"

Dilemma

I'm sure, you have experienced this dilemma. Who has not been crushed by disappointments? Who has not wept in the night, unsure of what the morning will bring? Like a journey on a rocky road, life necessitates that we suffer from flat tires every now and then, come upon a detour leading we know not where, and perhaps even stumble and get bruised in the process, in order for us to find meaning in the ride.

But the good thing about this "trip" is that God always provides us with friendly arrows along the way, in case we get lost. More often than not, we are enlightened on which way to turn or what to do in order to find the right path we have missed. The question really is, if we are willing to muster enough courage to recognize what needs to be done, and follow it through.

One of the hardest things to confront is the realization that a relationship has stopped contributing to our progress. As human beings, we are prone to getting attached to people, habits and even experiences that have given us self-fulfillment in the past. So, even when the time comes when it no longer fulfills us, we (being creatures of habit) still harbor the illusion that in time things will go back to the way they were.

In truth, sometimes it does; most of the time, it doesn't.

So, how does one let go and begin anew? I think the first thing we must do is to accept that things *have* changed, so we too must change in order to move on. A person is no longer right for you if he has stopped contributing positively to you in the spiritual dimension. This is especially hard to accept about someone whom you have been accustomed to love and hold close. But it happens, no matter how shattering it is.

Emotional disclosure

What is needed during these times is emotional disclosure. No, you should not stop giving love to a person. The only thing that should not stop is the bond that constituted the relationship.

As the saying goes, "There should be no end to loving as there is no end to giving."

We may decide to stop something but it's really just in our minds. The only one who can really put a stop to anything is God, who sees and controls everything. And because we are not in a position to see the whole picture, we must continue loving and giving even if there's no longer a relationship. Even if we no longer see the sense in doing so.

We tend to forget that God is a good God who never sleeps. He will reward those who put their faith in Him. And follow his example of loving unconditionally.

Remember, even if believing is hard, trusting is harder and waiting for good things to happen is hardest of all (the suspense could be fatal), we just have to learn to submit everything to Him.

On my part, I must admit, I felt emptiness when I decided to finally let go of a lot of things in my personal life. It's hard to be positive when tears are falling down your cheeks. Many days, I did not want to get out of bed thinking that, perhaps, I could sleep the sadness away.

Advice

Thankfully, friends gave me useful advice and provided me shoulders to cry on. If it was not given, I sought it. Some text messages came at the most opportune time, bearing timely quotations of hope that gently reminds me that Someone up there cared for me still.

What are the greatest lessons I've learned from all this? Three (and these I have known all along): There are things beyond our control; you'll never learn a lesson until you go through the motions, and the end of one thing is usually the beginning of something else.

Plus I realized that, though God can do everything for us (even miracles), we must do our part to show Him that we sincerely want it. Healing doesn't take place overnight nor does it happen effortlessly. Healing begins from within. We must want and initiate things to happen before God pours down the grace to turn our hopes into reality.

That's why, even when the worst storm seems to be passing through our lives, we should never lose our faith. Hold on. We may think that everything is over, that the battle has been lost. But know this –:

As long as there's life, God will never be through with anyone or anything, even if we have given up on things or people. It's understandable for us to give up or to not understand. Truly, all enlightenment that passes through our minds is but a privilege granted to us according to His perfect time.

And if God refuses to give up on us, why should we? Someone once said that every morning we wake up to is God telling us that He's giving us the chance to correct the mistakes we made yesterday (even if it means starting from zero).

I believed it then. I believe it now.

This is only the beginning.

The best is yet to come!

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Junior INQUIRER

SATURDAY, JANUARY 6, 2001 ✦ 12 PAGES ✦ VOLUME 5, NUMBER 13

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- Robots for Rent Page 2
- Art Contests Page 3
- Story: My First Case: My Lost Brother Page 7
- Shirley's Pets Page 11

2001 Nyaaaaahhhh!!!

The JI Snoopers quiz kids on the craziest, funniest, most exciting things they'd like to try out this brand new year

INTERVIEWS BY AARON DANTE M. MAMIIT, STANLY GALO C. SY, AND LOUELLA E. YU
INTRODUCTION BY NICO MIGUEL N. GARCIA

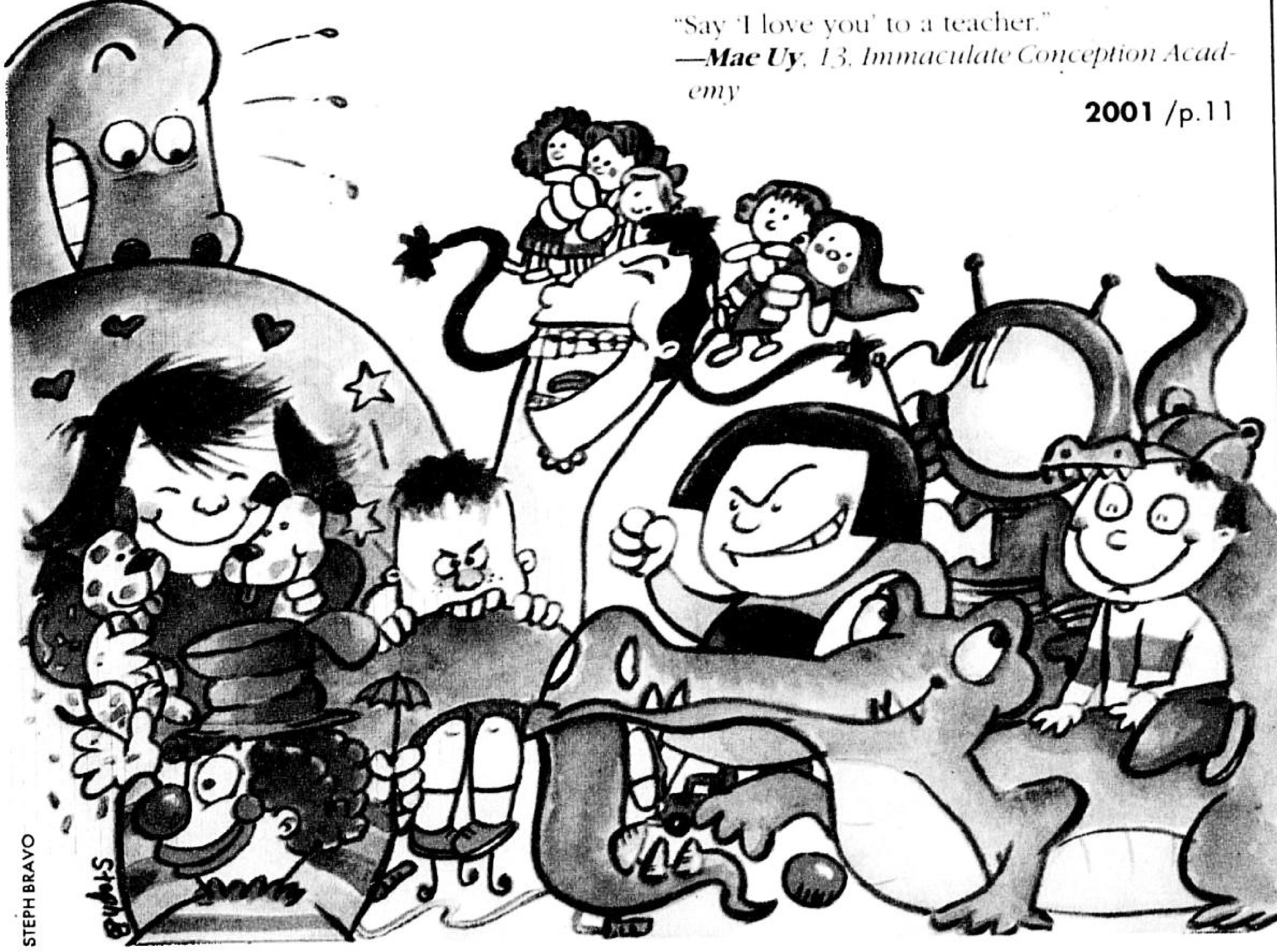
HAVE you ever done anything crazy in your life? Me. . .I'll probably turn a pyramid of Egypt upside-down, get tons of ice cream, and plop it on the pyramid's top, uh, bottom—whatever! The Egyptians could really like it. Many kids want to do craaazzzzy things in their life. Well, they have a chance to do it when the year 2001 starts. Here come the kids with their so called "plans"...

"I will dress up as a Powerpuff Girl and go cruisin' down Edsa."
—***Dorothy How**, 14, Immaculate Conception Academy*

"Give names to all 101 dalmatians, and memorize them."
—***Nicole Sy**, 13, Immaculate Conception Academy*

"Say 'I love you' to a teacher."
—***Mae Uy**, 13, Immaculate Conception Academy*

2001 /p.11



STEPH BRAVO

Plenty Stuff and Possibilities

*What's in store for us the next few years? **Mithi Rivera Sevilla**, a Grade 5 student at the Community of Learners school in Quezon City thought up some nifty gadgets that might be useful in the future.*

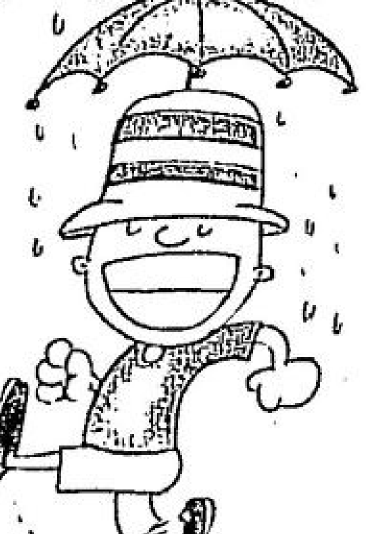
SOON, in the next stage of civilization, people will evolve and their looks will be different. For example, their pointing finger will grow longer because this finger is always used to press buttons. If you want to call someone, you just press a button.

People's feet will not grow as much anymore. People will have pretty small feet because feet would hardly be used. If you want to go into a house, a machine would do this for you and if you are to play *patintero*, you play it on the computer.

People's legs will also be longer so that people can walk through the flooded streets.

Here are some future gadgets which I have "invented" for Filipino children.

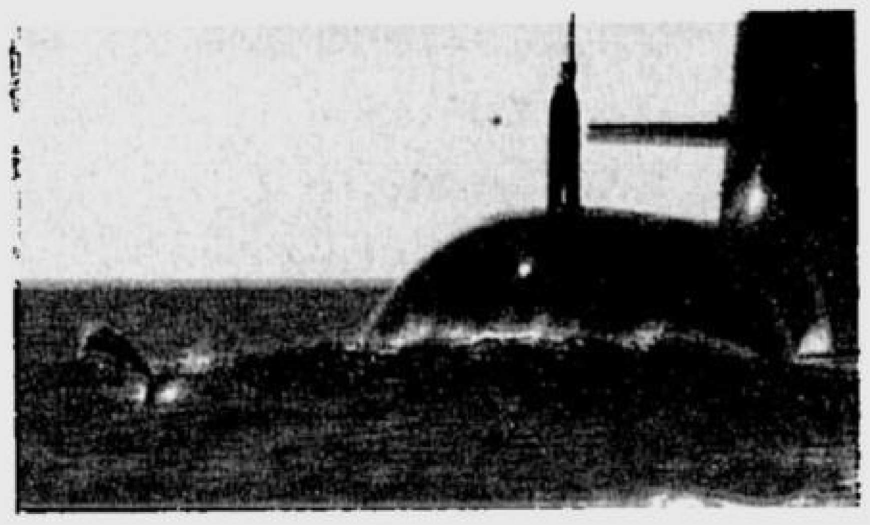
Weather Sensing Antenna (WSA)
Built-in-Umbrella (BIU)



The weather-sensing antenna comes free with a built-in umbrella and a timer. Punch in the time and date and you'll get a weather reading. Yellow means sunny, red means very hot, white if it's windy or green when it's rainy. If it turns blue, it means there will be a typhoon. The number of

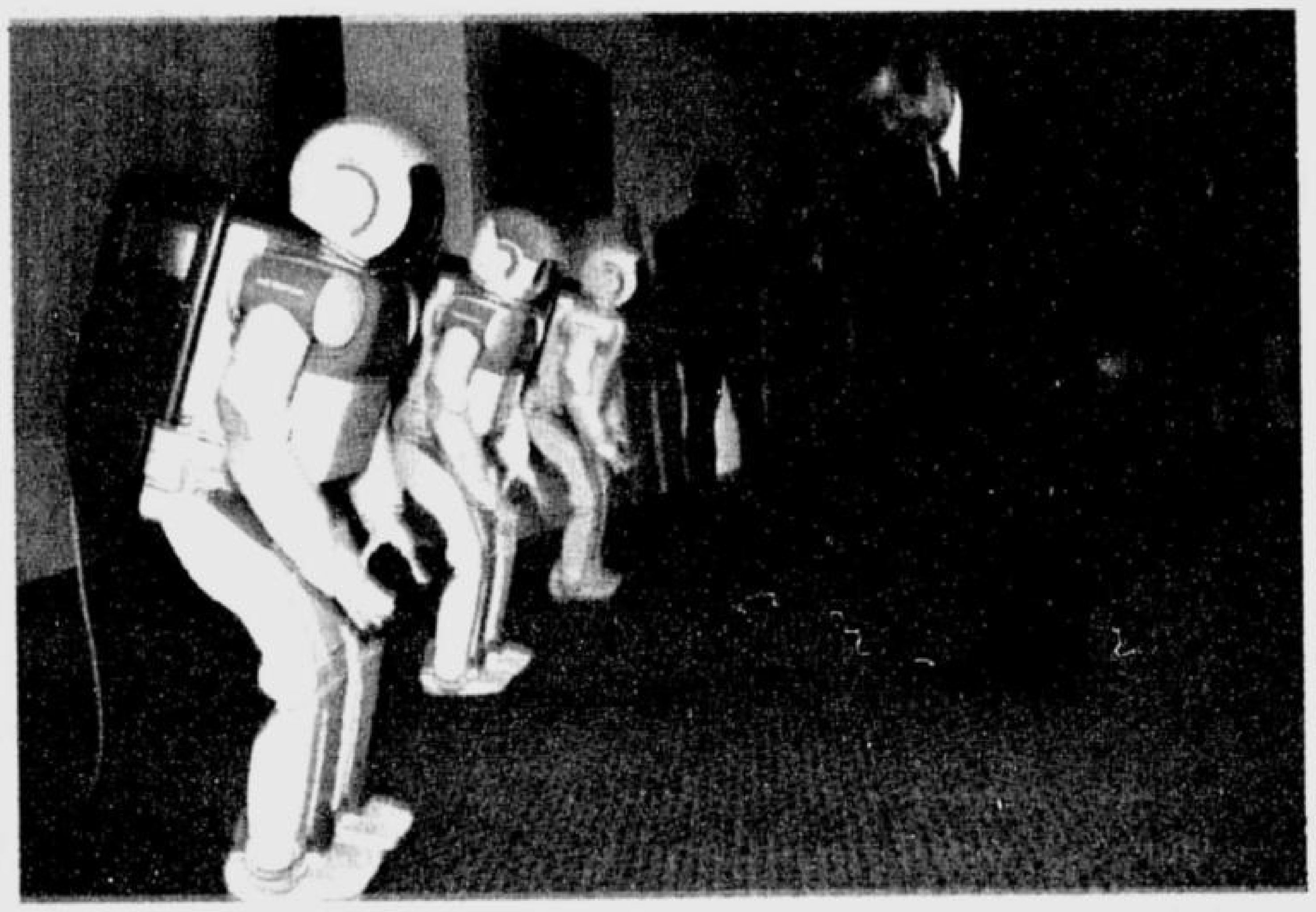
Plenty/p.4

WORLD SCOPE



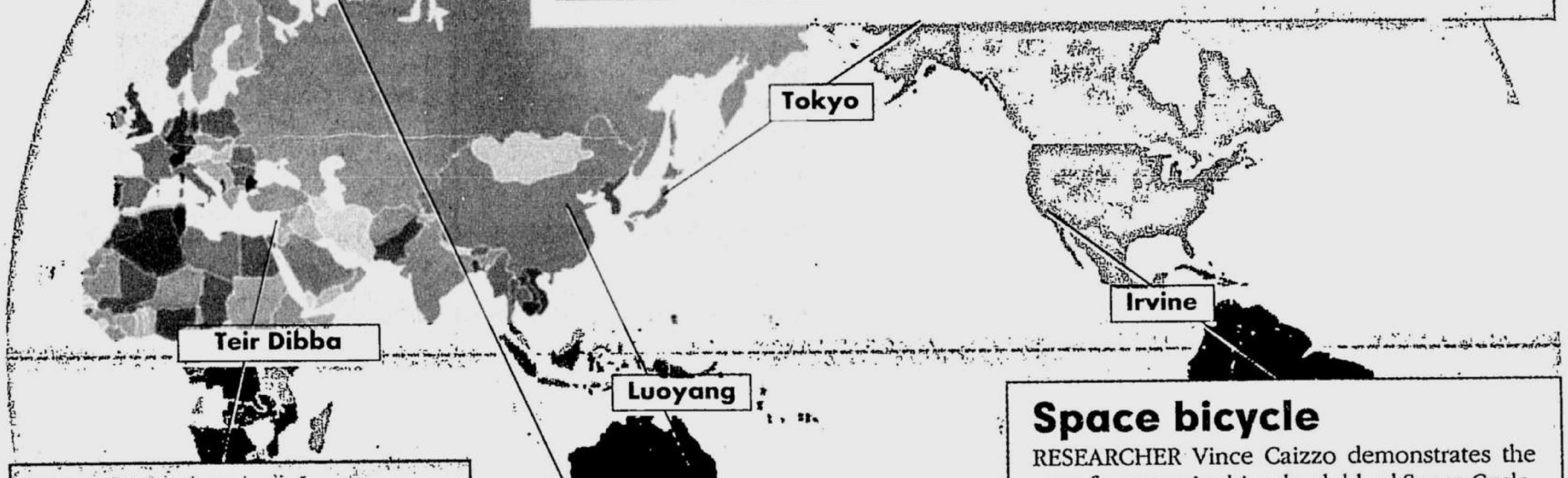
Dolphin luck

A DOLPHIN leaps over the crest of a wave created by the Australian naval submarine HMAS Dechaineux as the sub sailed to its base at Garden Island in West Australia. Australian submariners wear a dolphin emblem on their uniform and consider the animals good luck. *AP*



Robots for rent

AN EXECUTIVE of Honda Motor Co. (right) bows to a trio of Asimo robots after a press conference. The automaker will start renting out the human-like robots in the Japanese market, beginning mid-2001. The robots can walk and can do simple tasks like operating light switches and doorknobs. *AP*

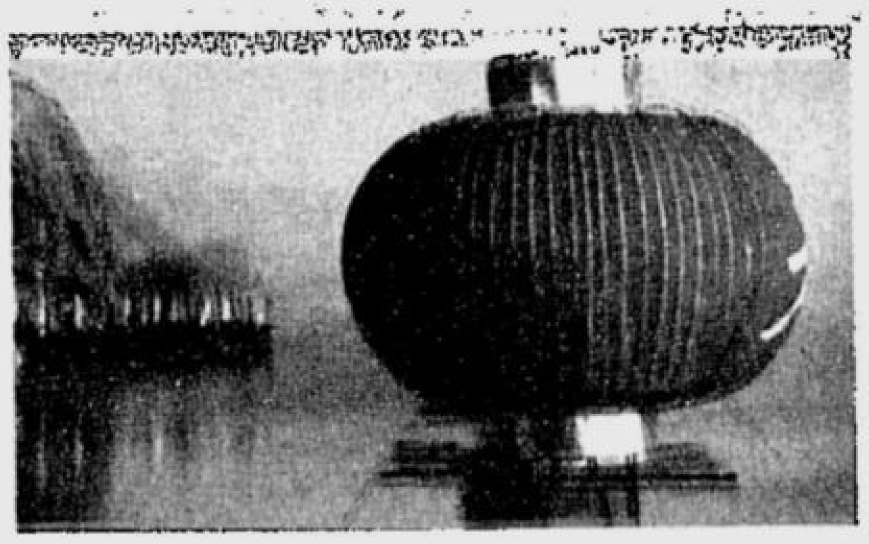


Biggest Quran

HASSAN Zayat, 24, puts final touches on a 604-page, 100x70 centimeter version of the Quran, Islam's holy book, at his home in a village near the southern port city of Tyre, Lebanon. Zayat worked for two years on the Book, for which he used 170 kinds of calligraphy nibs, and is hoping to submit his work to be listed in the Guinness Book of World Records as the largest version of the Quran. *AP*

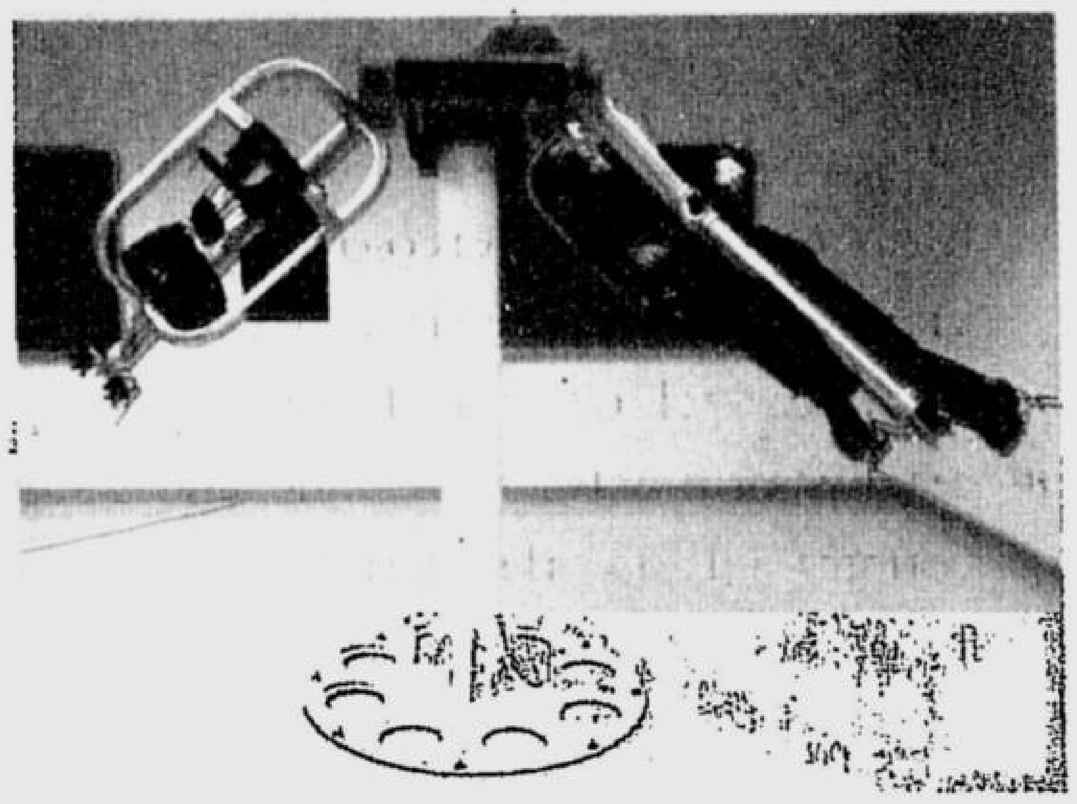
Holiday lanterns

EIGHT huge red lanterns are set up in the Yishui River beside the Longmen Grottos in Henan Province, China. Exactly 6.5 meters in diameter and 260 kilogram in weight, these lanterns were made by folk artist He Boing and his family. *AP*



Space bicycle

RESEARCHER Vince Caizzo demonstrates the use of an exercise bicycle, dubbed Space Cycle, at the University of California. The bicycle was developed to make sure astronauts get enough exercise in space to strengthen their bones and keep their muscles toned.. Astronauts usually suffer loss of bone and muscle density and fitness during long stints in space. *AP*

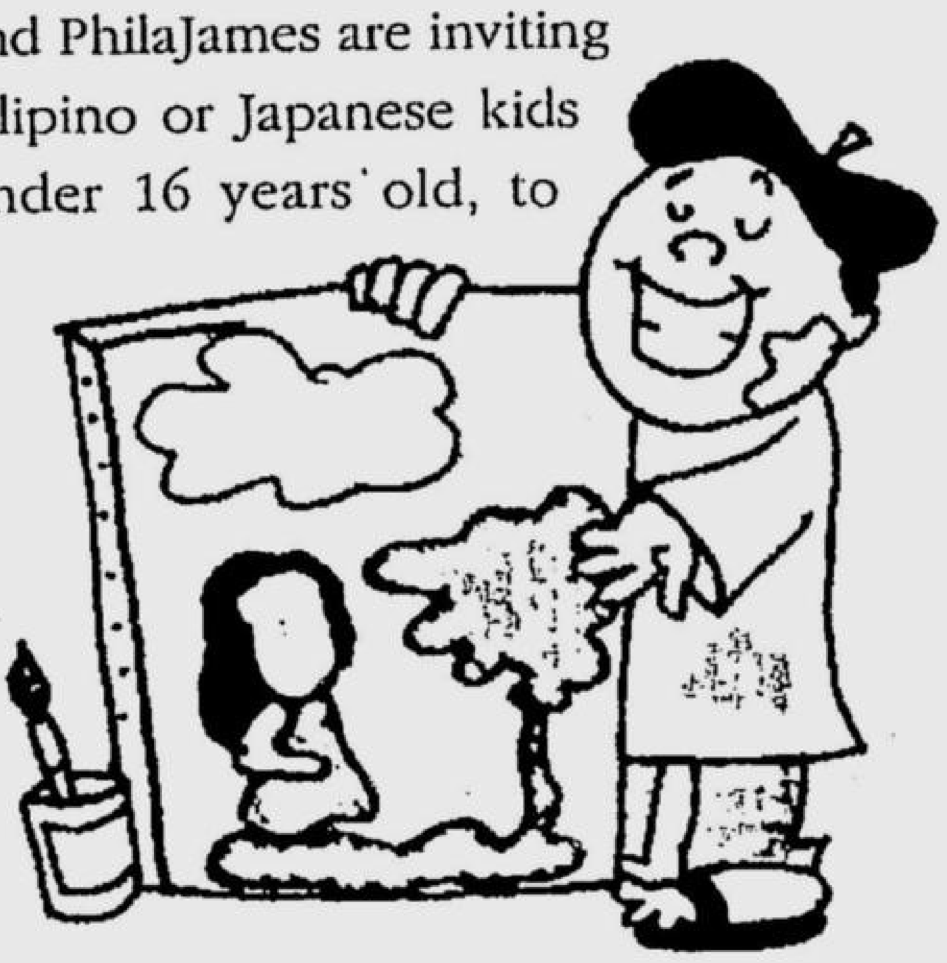


OUT
THERE
By Marlet D. Salazar

Got something for Out There?
Send us the info two weeks in advance. Our fax numbers are 897-4793 up to 94. Don't forget to include your contact numbers and addresses.

Contests

KIDDIE ART. Join the Philippines-Japan Children Art Contest 2001! The Embassy of Japan together with the GSIS Museum and PhilaJames are inviting Filipino or Japanese kids under 16 years old, to submit any of their original paintings not later than Jan. 12. Works of the finalists will be exhibited at the GSIS Museum during the Philippines-Japan Children Art Exhibition on Jan. 25-March 15. Exciting prizes await the grand prize winners. For details call up 551-1301 and look for Mr. Eric Zerrudo. Or visit the Philippines-Japan Children Art Contest 2001 Committee at the GSIS Museum, Financial Center, Roxas Boulevard, Manila.



ART CASTLES. Do you like painting or drawing castles, palaces of the kings? Then be part of the NCCA's International Reward Competition. Organized by the World of Art magazine and the municipality of Celje, Slovenia, it is open for everyone under 20 years old. Entries must focus on the theme "Castles—the Cultural Heritage," referring to castles, palaces or manor houses which have served as buildings and residences of kings and nobles. Materials may range from tempera, watercolor, dry pastel or graphics using paper sized 30x42 cm. Don't forget to include: your full name, age, art teacher or mentor's full name, school and country. All artworks must be sent by March 1 to: Likovni Svet—The World of Art, Draga31, SI-3220 Store, Slovenia. For inquiries call up 527-2175, 527-2192 local 605 and look for Ms Yvette Macayan. Or send an e-mail to info@ncca.gov.ph

Workshops

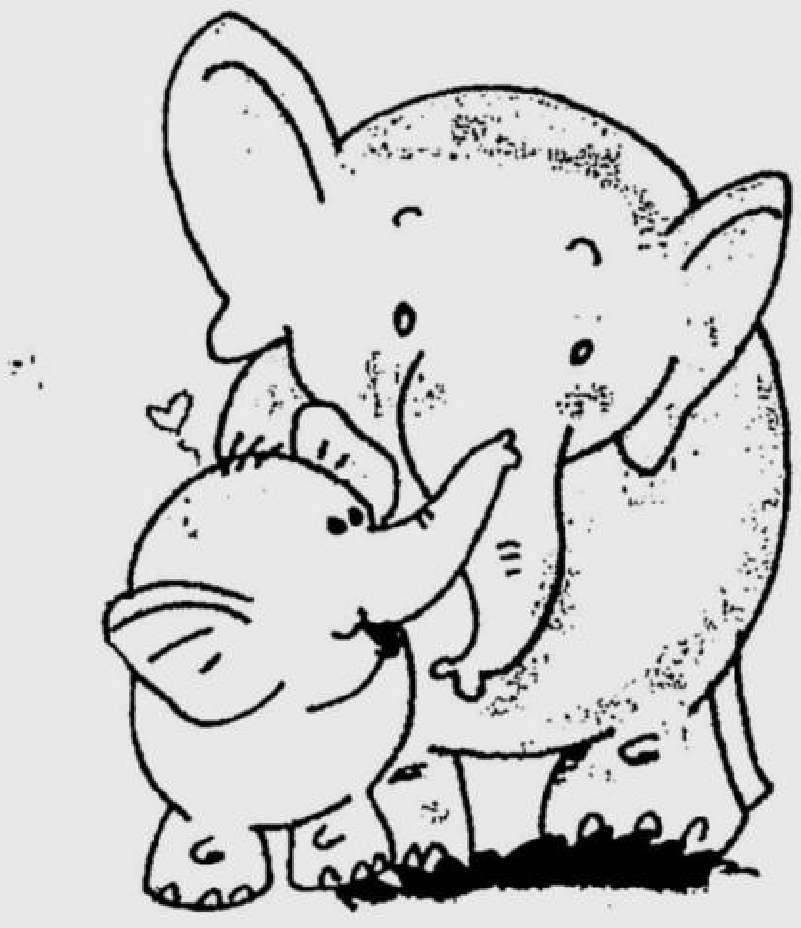
WRITING. Improve your writing skills at the Vinta Publishing House's writing workshop. Learn to develop your own style in feature, story and essay writing as well as writing book and movie reviews. Be ready for an interview before you can join. Workshops are held on Saturdays 9:30-11:30 a.m. and 1-3 p.m. For inquiries call 815-6925, 815-4938. You may drop by the Windsor Tower, 163 Legaspi St., Legaspi Village, Makati City.

WEB WEAVING. The Philippine Science Centrum and My Town.com will conduct a web education and training program this month. You can learn web page design, image processing and website development and management. Call 525-8752, 536-3092, 525-8418. PSC is located at the UP Manila Compound, Pedro Gil Street, corner Taft Avenue, Manila.

Cable Picks

SCOOBY'S FRIDAY NIGHT OUT. This month, Scooby and the mystery-solving gang are taking over each Friday night with a special two-hour feature. In each show, the teen detectives help Scooby Doo cruise in their Mystery Machine to investigate monstrous mysteries and unmask fake ghoulies. Tune in to Cartoon Network every Friday at 7-9 p.m.

WHITE ELEPHANT. Meet the royal white elephants as they adapt to feeding and walking by themselves. According to a Buddhist text, people who own a white elephant are symbols of the Lord of the Universe or an ideal king who would rule the world. Find out more about it on National Geographic Channel's "Heaven and Empire—The White Elephant" tomorrow at 9 p.m.



Plenty Stuff and Possibilities

(from page 1)

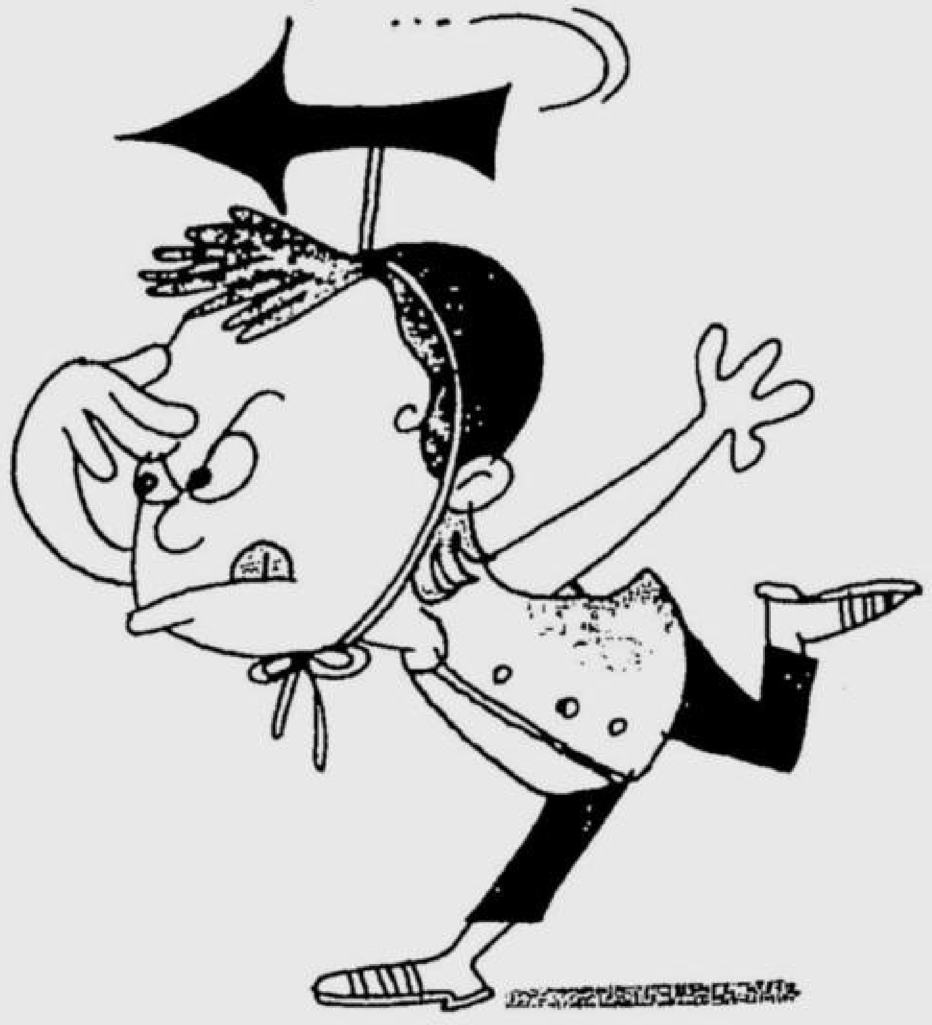
rings will signify the signal number of the typhoon.

Now the BIU (built-in umbrella) will sprout out automatically from your head when it becomes too hot, or too cold, or too rainy or too sunny. It will be sensed by your WSA.

Be ep
BE
BE EEP!
₱

Codico

The codico is not for school exams. This is for someone lost! The arrow will point where you need to turn and where you'll stop! Cool, huh? This is perfect for someone who forgets where North, South, East or West is, like me!



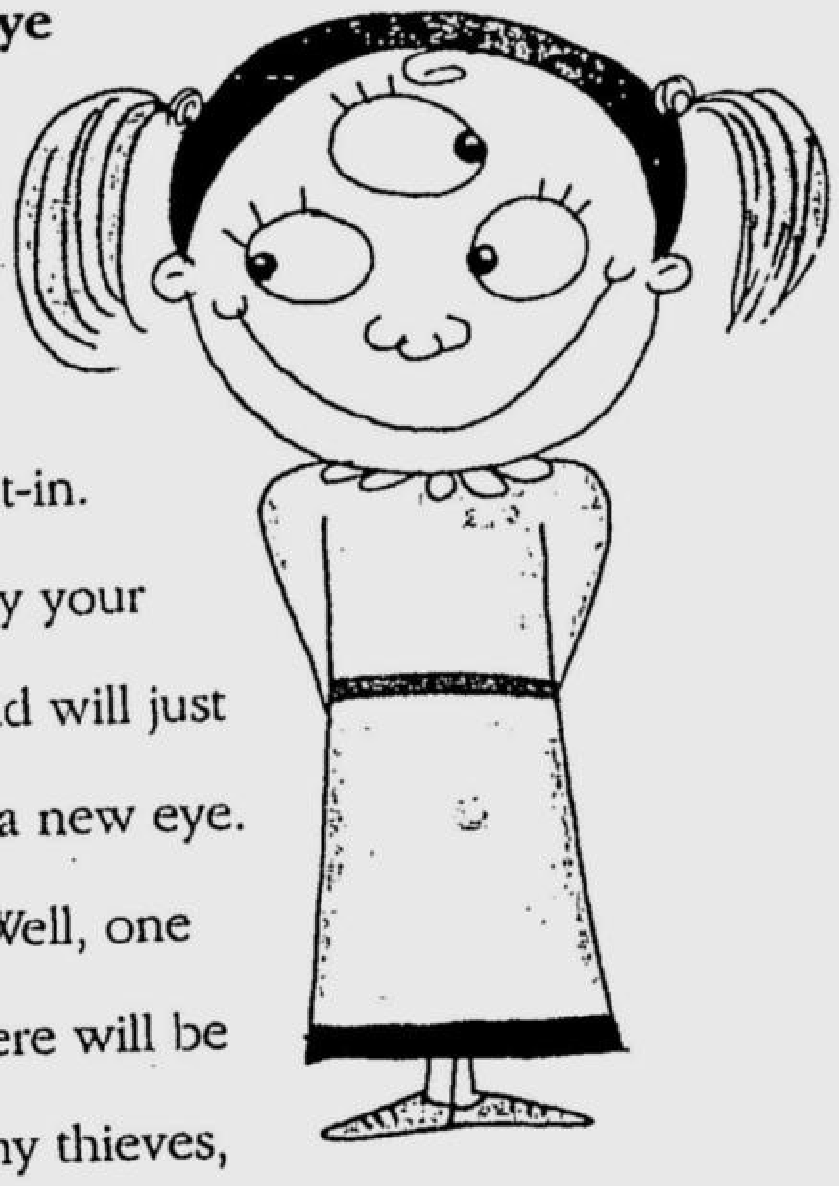
Built-in Pocket for Money (BiPfM)

Sensory Spending Thinker (SST)

Like the WSA and the BIU, these two also come together. The Built-in Pocket for Money is sewed onto your skin and you put your money inside. These are very useful, too especially because it can turn transparent. (No one can see your money and this will protect you from pickpockets.)

If in case your mother gives you a P1,000 bill and you're only supposed to spend P300, so the Sensory Spending Thinker is just right for you. You only need to write how much you need to spend, then if you overspend, an alarm will go off!

Third Eye



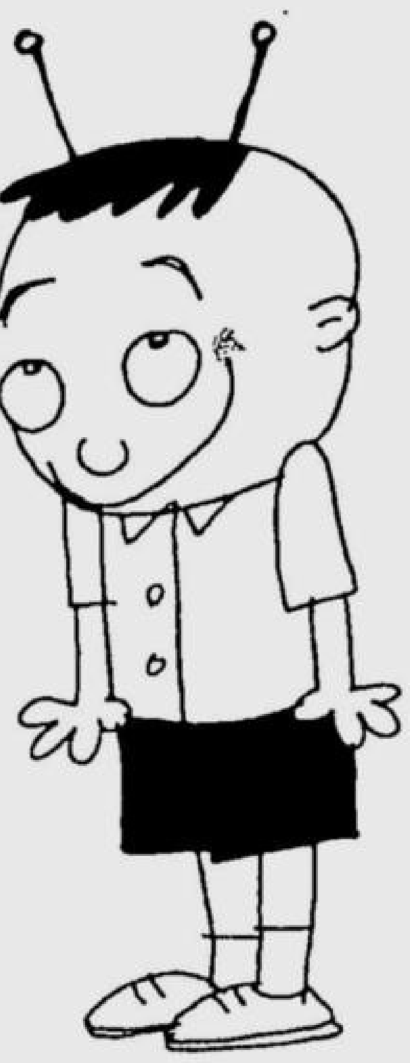
This third eye is not built-in. One day your forehead will just sprout a new eye. Why? Well, one day there will be so many thieves, pickpockets and robbers that the third eye will be a lot of help!

Blood Pressure Detectors

The blood pressure detectors sense your blood pressure. Of course, is if it is getting too low or too high but it can also sense your heartbeat if it is fast or slow. What's nice about it is it is built-in.

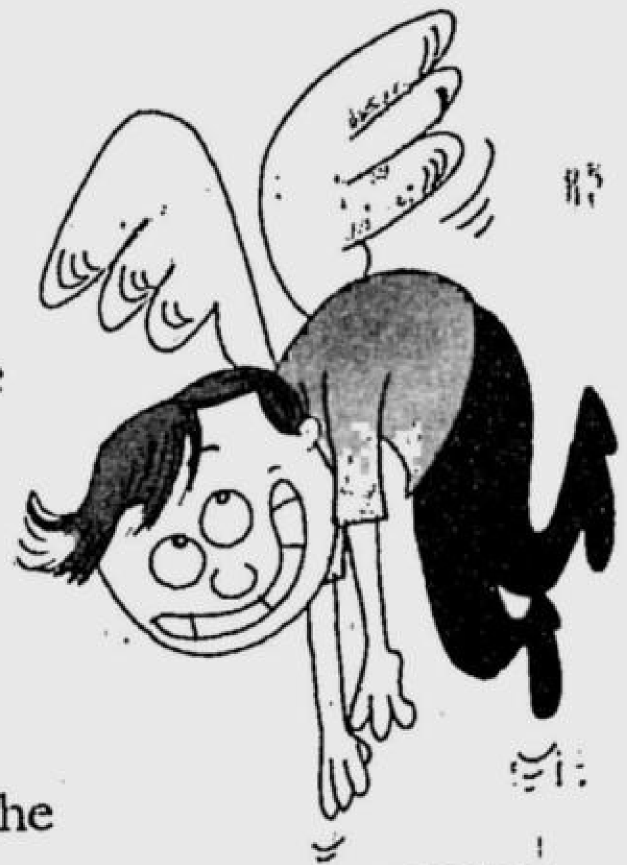
Health Antenna

The health antenna sets off an alarm if you're sick or when your body temperature is below or above the normal range. You'll immediately know if you can't go to school. You can't disable this. This comes free with a bucket full of nutrition tablets.



Wings

These wings are not built in. There will come a time when it will just pop up. This will happen when the world becomes too full of garbage and there are too many floods. These wings will rescue you from disaster.



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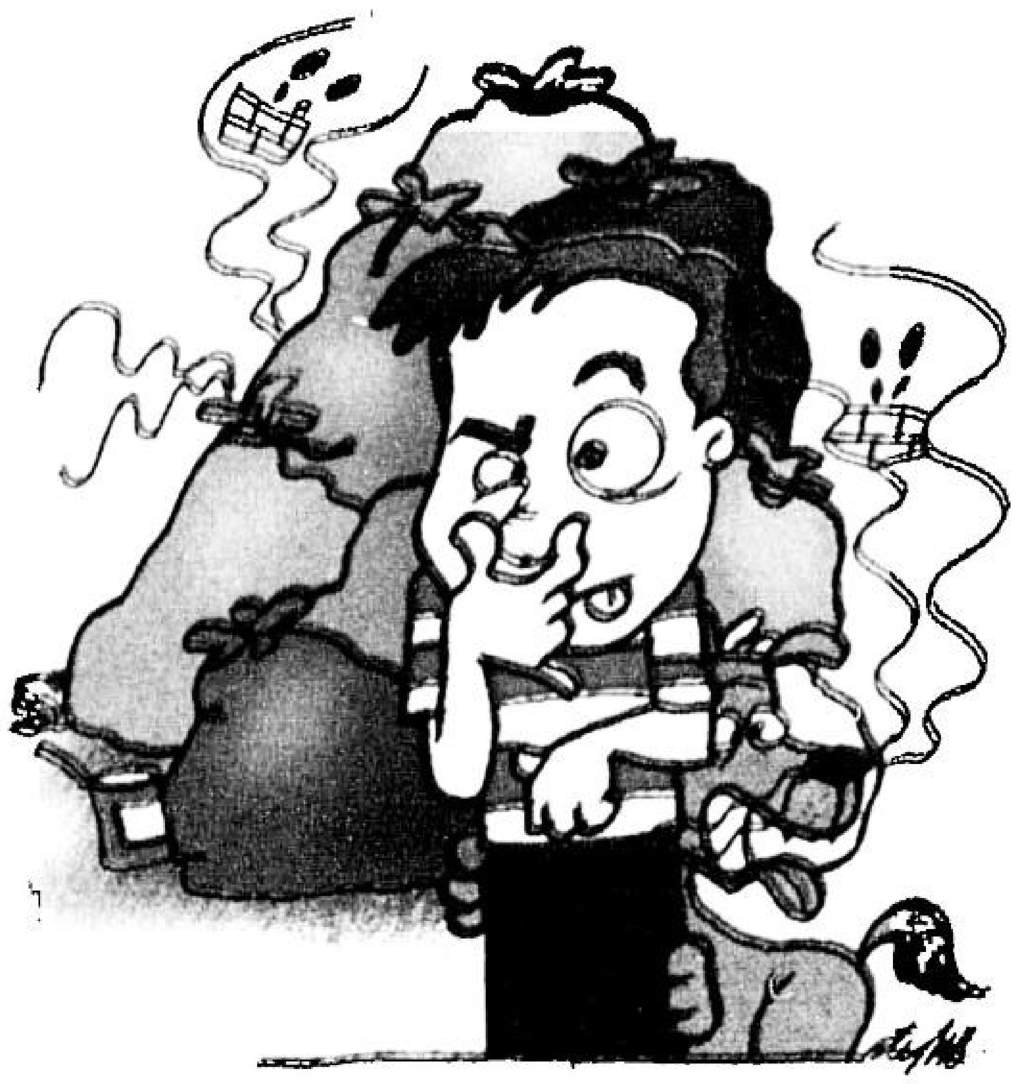
Journal Pages

Help Save the Environment

By Nicholas Anthony Laxamana



OUR country is very polluted. Many Filipinos are getting sick. This is caused by germs from garbage left or thrown on the streets by irresponsible people. If this problem keeps up, our whole country will be a big garbage dump.

One thing we kids can do is help make sure that all garbage is properly disposed of. We can also write letters to local officials to request more trashcans in public places. We kids can also put up signs to let people know where they can put their garbage.

We can also recycle. Always use both sides of pieces of paper. Separate your trash into biodegradables (stuff that will naturally rot), non-biodegradables (stuff that won't naturally rot like plastics) and recyclables (paper, bottles). This way the producers of different products can use the recycled trash and make it into something even better than before.

That's what we can do to keep our community and country from getting even more polluted. And it is also something kids and adults can do together.

Sound Familiar ?
Write down your thoughts now and send them to JI. Who knows, you might just get published!

Straight from JI Readers

You can now reach us via e-mail! Our address is ji@inquirer.com.ph Don't forget to include your complete name, age, snail mail address and your phone number. Hope to hear from you soon!

No fireworks, please

HEY, I just want to say that all of us don't really need to celebrate the Christmas holiday by lighting fireworks. We could have celebrated a quiet and happy Christmas without those things, right? That way, we wouldn't be doing something that might have risked a child's or another person's life. Fireworks may be fun to look, but I know that some people force children to work in fireworks factories. There's too much smoke around already without fireworks.—**STEPHANIE PHYLLIS TSAI TE**, 11, Immaculate Conception Academy, Greenhills

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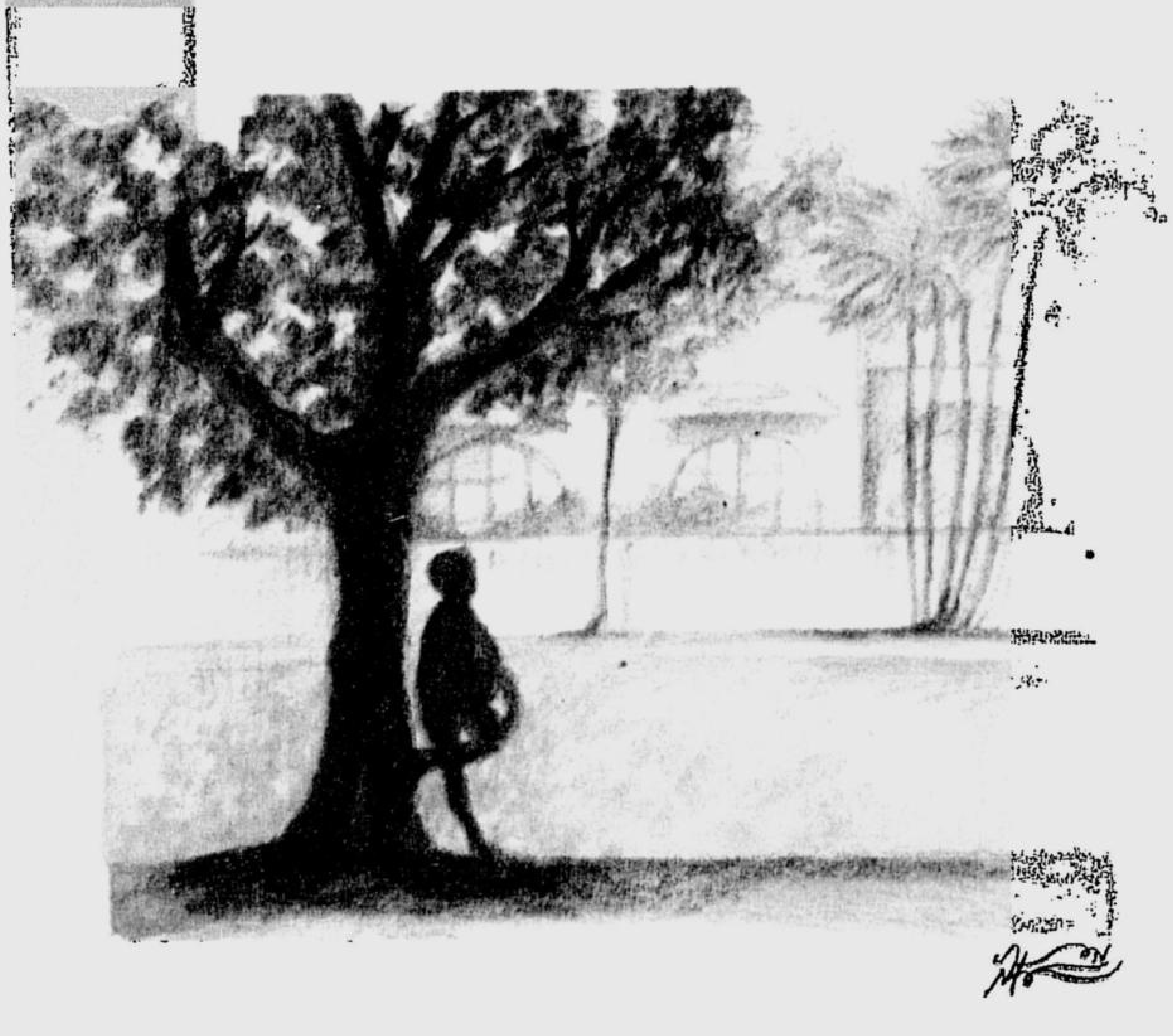
Kay Michael na Matagal nang Lumipat ng Tirahan

Ni Genaro R. Gojo Cruz
Guhit ni Jason Moss

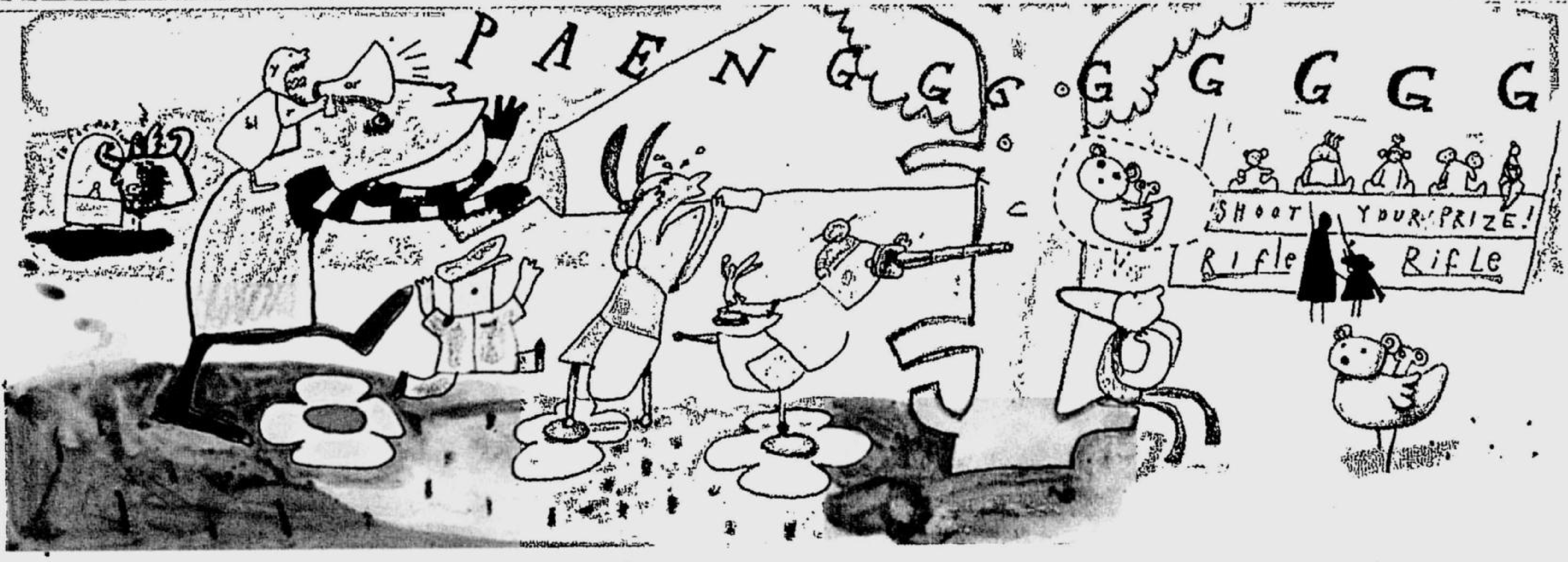
Nalungkot ako nang magpaalam kang
lilipat na kayo ng tirahan.
Parang titigil sa pagtibok ang aking puso
At ang aking mundo sa pag-ikot.
Gumuho ang aking maraming balak.
Bakit kailangan n'yo pang lumipat ng tirahan?
Wala namang butas ang inyong bubungan,
matibay naman ang inyong bintana at pinto,
bibihira naman mawalan ng tubig at
kuryente sa ating lugar
at isa pa, may malawak at maganda kayong hardin.
Bakit kailangan n'yo pang lumipat ng tirahan?
Sabi mo kailangang kayong lumipat ng tirahan
dahil sa trabaho ng Tatay na inhinyero.
Pero kung ikaw ang masusunod,
ayaw mo sanang lumipat.

Lagi kitang kalaro.
Kahit nga anong laro kinakaya mo
para maging masaya tayo.
Kalimitang nilalaro natin
ay taguan,
tumbang preso,
langit at lupa,
piko,
at iba pa.
Habulan ang hindi ko makakalimutang laro natin.
Ang tanda ko,
Nadapa ka noon at nasugat ang iyong tuhod.
Iyak ka ng iyak dahil sa hapdi.
Habang tumutulo ang dugo
ay inalalayan kita papunta sa aming bahay.
Kaagad-agad kang ginamot ni Nanay.
Hinugasan muna ang iyong sugat
at saka nilagyan ng gamot.
Pagkatapos ay sumilay muli ang ngiti sa iyong labi
at nag-aya kang maglaro uli tayo hindi na habulan.

Matagal na kayong lumipat ng tirahan
pero hindi kita nakakalimutan.
Ikaw na aking dating malimit kalaro
at ikaw na matalik kong kaibigan.



*Si **Genaro** ay dating Literary editor ng The Torch Publications, ang pahayagang pang-kampus ng Philippine Normal University.*



MY FIRST CASE: MY LOST brother

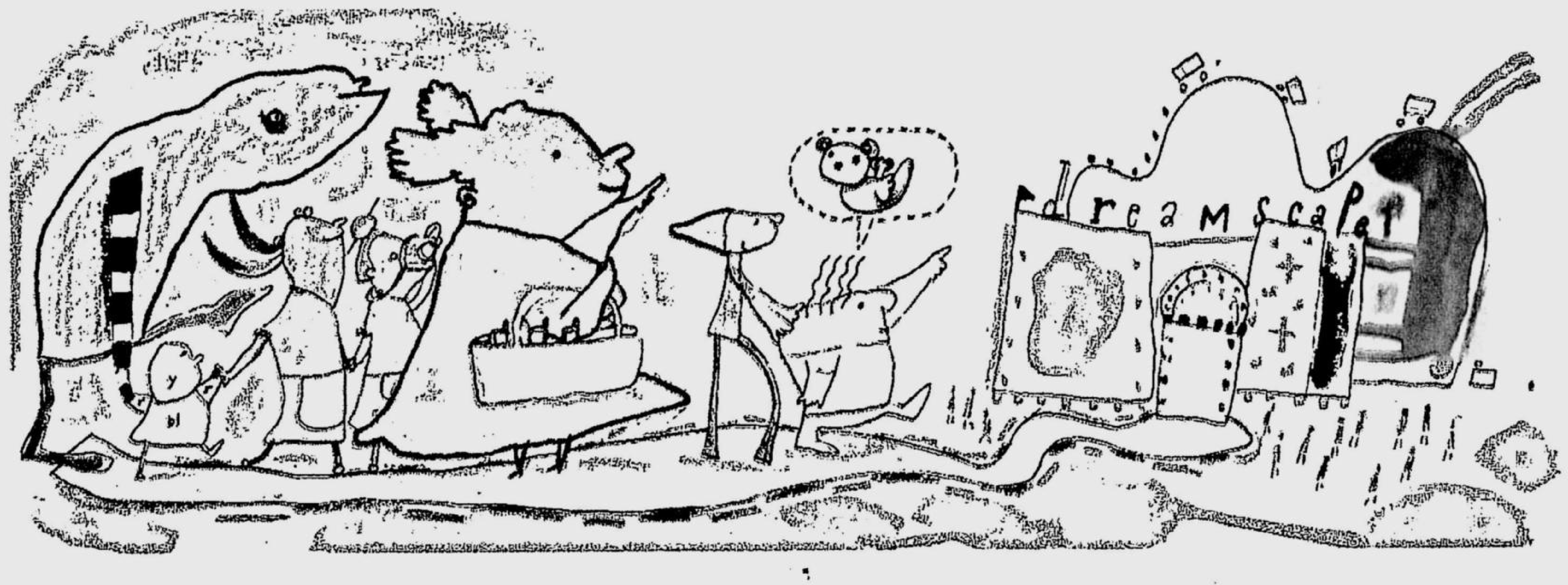
• BY KIM GUZMAN • ART BY JASON MOSS

ONE DAY, I went to the mall with my aunt, my cousins my brother and our *yayas.* We were going to Dreamscape, but Paeng my brother wanted to buy toys. When we went there, we got separated.

Nobody knew Paeng went to the toy store. Nang-nang, my aunt, told us to look for Paeng. She was very worried, then I remembered something. Paeng wanted to go to the toy store.

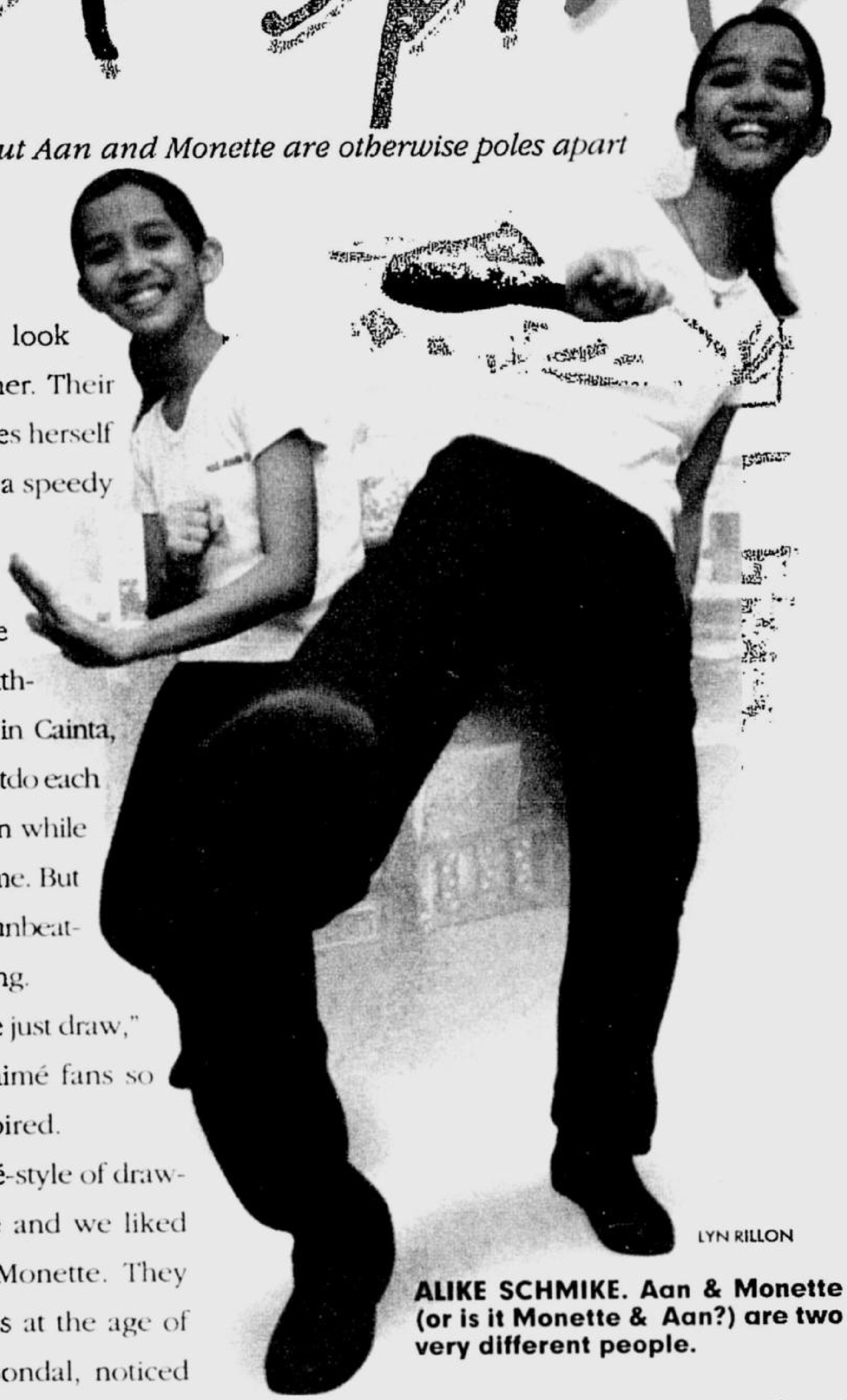
So I told Nang-nang where he might be. When we checked the toy store and there he was looking at the toys. When we got home, I told mom and dad what happened. They grounded Paeng. The end.

***Kim**, 10, is in fourth grade at the Poveda Learning Center. He says his brother, Paeng, was 7 years old when it happened. Paeng is now 9 years old.*
***Jason** is a freelance illustrator and painter.*



Twin Spins

Together their artwork is better, but Aan and Monette are otherwise poles apart



LYN RILLON

ALIKE SCHMIKE. Aan & Monette (or is it Monette & Aan?) are two very different people.

By Christine C. Rivero

REALLY, they insist, they don't look alike. Aan is taller; Monette is thinner. Their personalities also differ—Monette sees herself as more of a loner while Aan can be a speedy mile-a-minute talker. And they're supposed to be identical twins?

Twelve-year-old Terese Ray-Anne and Terese Monette Aquino are sixth-graders at Morning Dew Montessori in Cainta, Rizal. They admit to always trying to outdo each other in school competitions and even while swimming or playing volleyball at home. But they both agree that they can be an unbeatable tandem when it comes to drawing.

"When we have nothing to do, we just draw," says Aan. The two of them are animé fans so most of their artwork is animé-inspired.

"We wanted to imitate (the animé-style of drawing) because the colors were nice and we liked the way they draw eyes," adds Monette. They started sharing pencils and crayons at the age of 7. Their art teacher, Bernadette Bondal, noticed their drawing skills and decided to help improve their style. "Aan and Monette are both very good at drawing the human figure and they can really capture unique facial expressions," Ms Bondal points out.

This knack for drawing people made the two of them perfect as their school paper's editorial cartoonists. "I would draw one person and (Monette) would draw the other," Aan tells us.

"Then we do the shading together," says Monette, "and we share ideas on what to draw."

Grinning at her sister, Aan adds, "If my drawing is ugly, she'll pick on me. Then we can both make it better."

Both girls won for their editorial cartoons in the Division Elementary Press Conference in October and together they went on to represent their school in the regionals. "For some people, it's the first time they've heard of twins who are both artists," says Monette, "we're proud of that too."

R☺RRIFIC

'Rrific kids are smart
'Rrific kids are fun
Some aren't in the honors list
But get their homework done

Somehow the world's
a better place
I know this much is true
Hey 'Rrific kid!
We know you're there
We love you 'cause you're you!

If you think you're 'Rriffic' or know someone who is, fill out the nomination form below and send it to:

Junior Inquirer
'KIDS'R'RRIFIC' Page
Phil. Daily Inquirer, Chino Roces cor.
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1231 Makati City

Chosen nominees will be featured on this page and will get a **free Junior Inquirer T-shirt!**

Kids 'r'rrific
nomination form

I nominate: ______________________

Age: ________

I think she's/he's 'Rrific because:
(Here's a tip! Write a detailed description of a good deed, project or accomplishment by your nominee.)
____
____
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She/he lives at
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and studies at
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Her/his contact number is:
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Sender's Name:
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Sender's Age & School:
______, ________________________

Sender's Address:
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Sender's Contact No.
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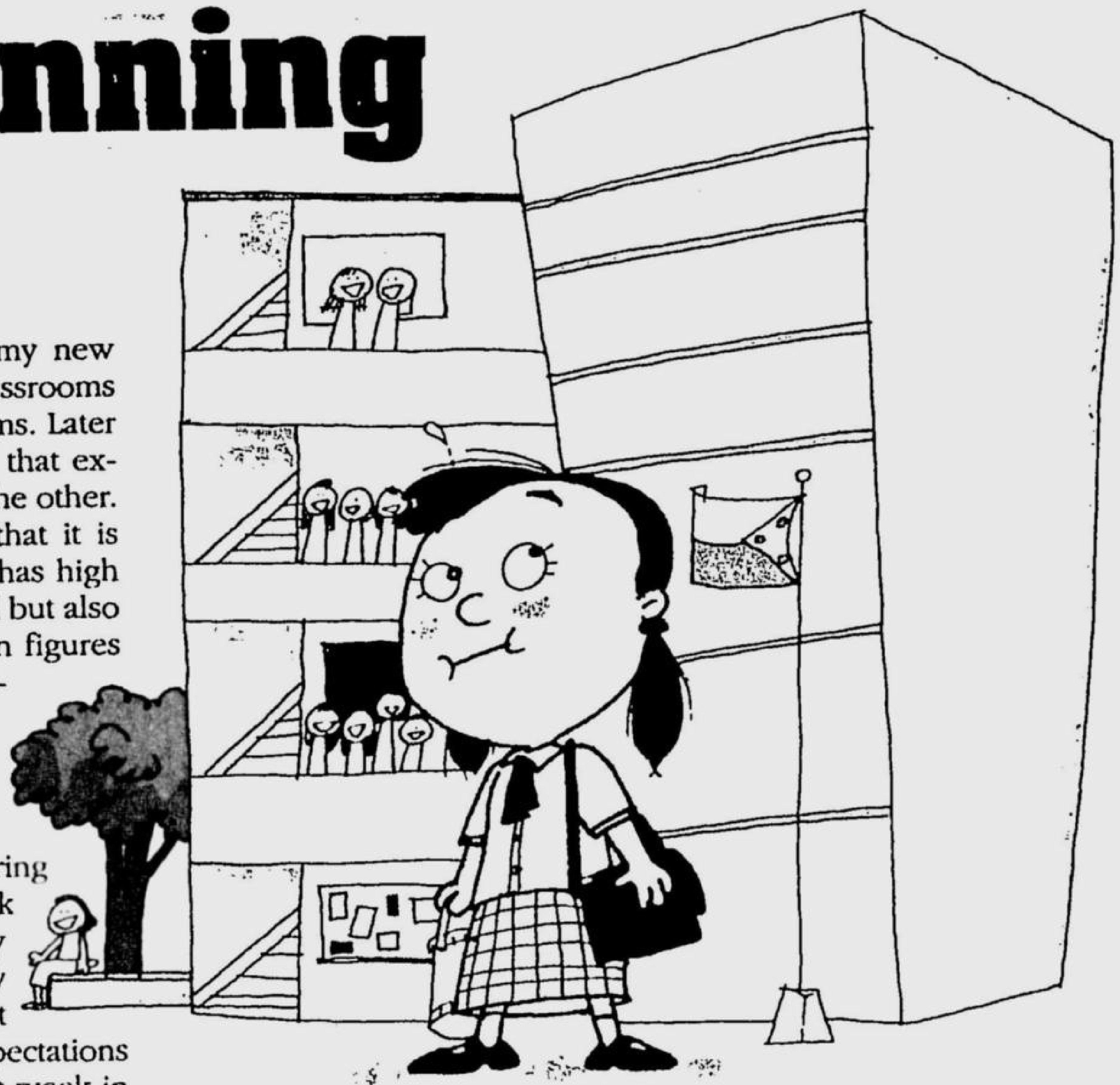
A New Beginning



AN ESSAY BY KARLYNE KIMBERLY KWOK
ST. THERESA'S COLLEGE
QUEZON CITY

THERE I was walking through the wide corridors of my new school searching for my classroom. I noticed that all the classrooms look alike, huge, and with windows on both side of the rooms. Later on, I learned that the school is situated in a 7.5-hectare lot, that explained why I had a hard time walking from one building to the other.

In a few months at St. Theresa's College, I've realized that it is indeed one of the best traditional schools in the country. It has high academic standards and the students are not only good in oral but also written English; they are not only good in words but also in figures and numbers. In general, my classmates are intelligent, well-mannered, simple and kind.

Being a Protestant, I really appreciate the attitude and disposition of my Catholic teachers who are kindhearted, sympathetic, compassionate and humane like my schoolmates.

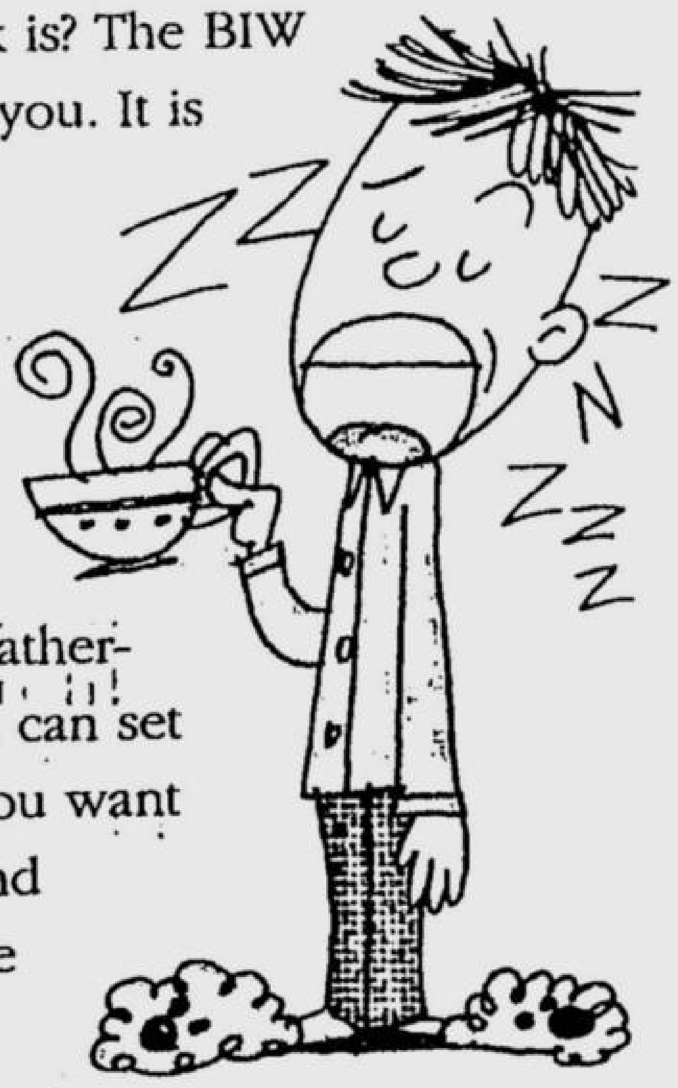
Although I was fascinated by everybody's politeness during my first day in school, I vividly recalled how I've to hold back my tears when I suddenly remember by cheerful and witty classmates in my old school. Together with another new student, we spent the earlier part of the morning talking about our experience in our past schools, our new plans and new expectations as we face the challenges in this new school. During my first week in school, I could hardly cope with the silence inside the class. Maybe I was not accustomed or used to silence; but classes were so quiet that you could hear a pin drop. I found it so lonesome that my eyes grew misty a couple of times while my teachers were discussing our lesson. I still remember my old classmates, my classmates from kindergarten to elementary. In every sense, I really miss them and love all of them.

I know that the person I am today is largely because of how old school has educated me, how my mentors and tutors from other institution have molded and guided me and how my parents have brought me up. I really thank God for all of these wonderful blessings. But life must go on and here I am, a few months later, a new leaf, a new beginning.

Plenty Stuff and Possibilities

(from page 4)

Built-in Watch and Alarm Clock



Does your watch always get lost? Can't sleep at night? Can't wake up in the morning no matter how loud your alarm clock is? The BIW is right for you. It is built into your hand where you can't take it off. It's weather-proof. You can set the time you want to sleep and at that time the artificial nerve cell will send the message to the brain and you'll sleep. In the morning, it will also send you a message to the brain and you'll awaken.

Cell Phone Earring

It's right on your ear and you can dial it just by touching it. You can talk and no one will know! But beware it can easily get lost for it is just the size of an earring.

Reminding Computer

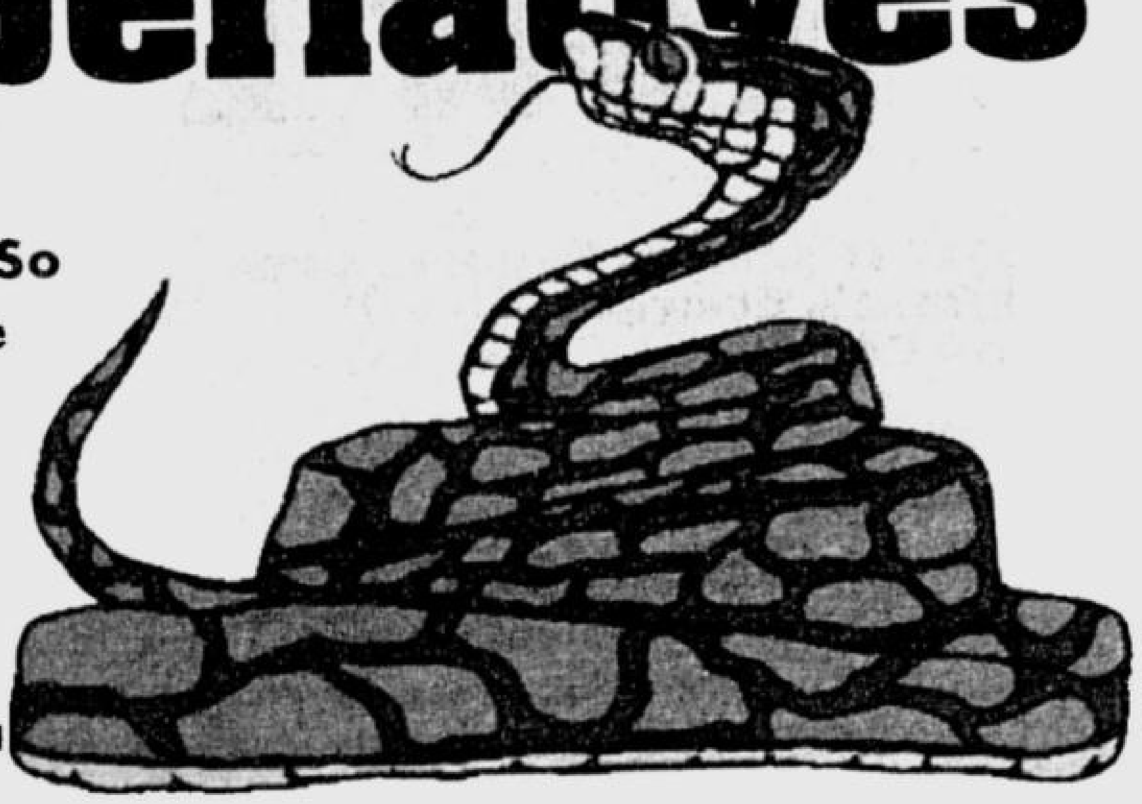
It reminds you of what you need to do as well as your plans for the day so you would not forget anything. It will not stop nagging you until you have done what you planned!

DON'T FORGET THE MILK, MOM.

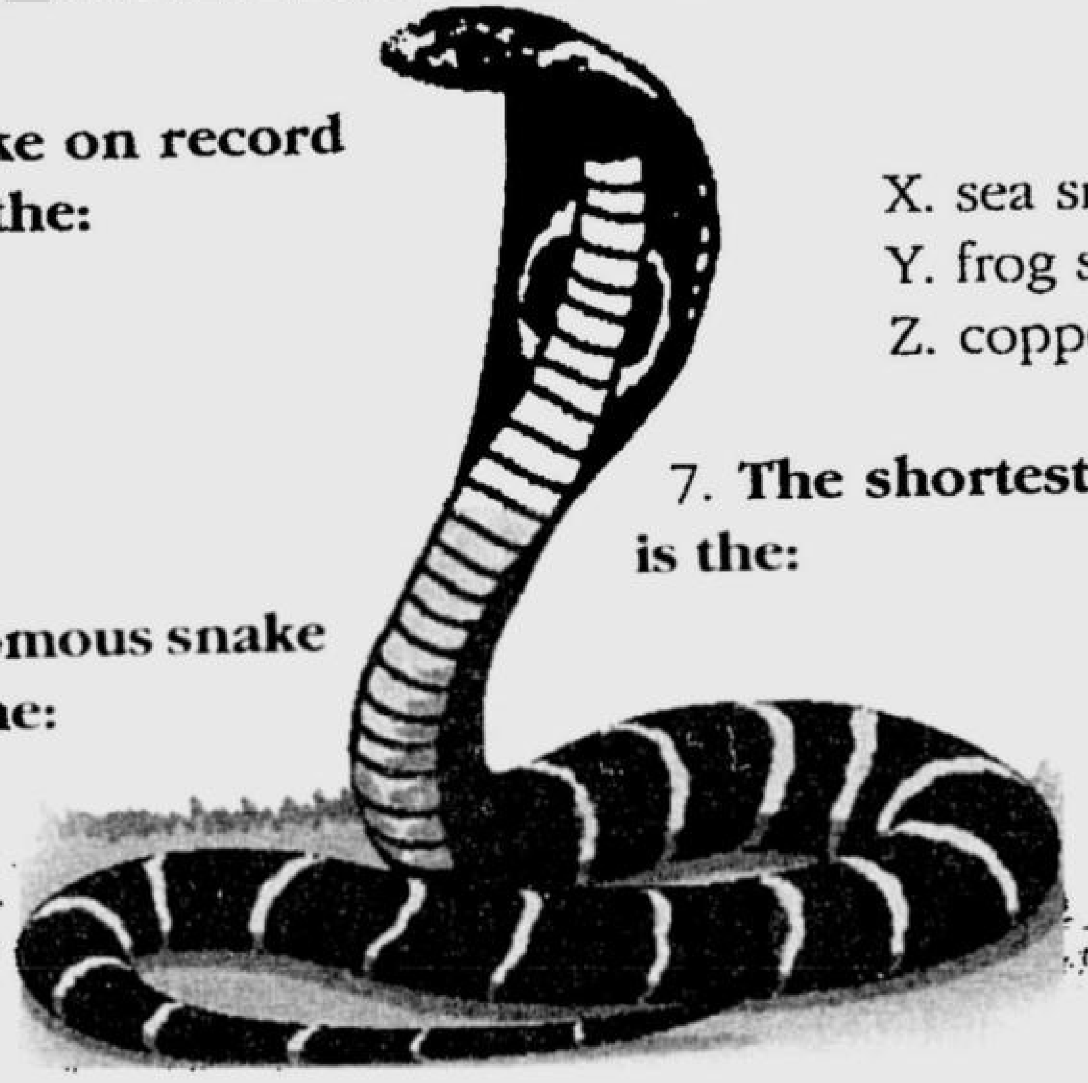
¿ThinkathoN?

BY BONG BARRAMEDA

Snake Superlatives



LIKE it or not, it's the Year of the Snake. So whether you're ophidiophobic or not, it's time to face some "super" facts on this slinky, slithery creature. Can you charm your way to the right answer in each number?



1. **The longest snake on record (32 ft. 9½ in.) is the:**

A. cobra
B. anaconda
C. python

2. **The longest venomous snake (18 ft. 9 in.) is the:**

X. cobra
Y. rattlesnake
Z. tiger snake

3. **The shortest snake (4¼ in.) is the:**

A. worm snake
B. garter snake
C. thread snake

4. **The heaviest snake (up to 500 lbs.) is the:**

X. anaconda
Y. boa constrictor
Z. taipan

5. **The heaviest venomous snake (34 lb.) is the:**

A.. bushmaster
B. diamondback rattlesnake
C. pit viper

6. **The most venomous snake is the:**

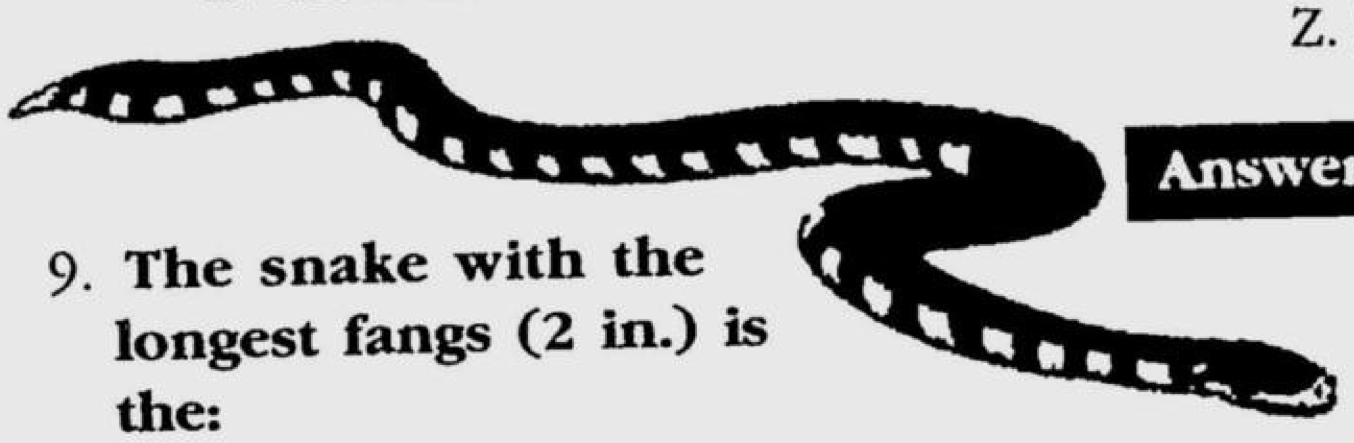
X. sea snake
Y. frog snake
Z. copperhead

7. **The shortest venomous snake is the:**

A. Indian pygmy viper
B. garter snake
C. Namaqua dwarf adder

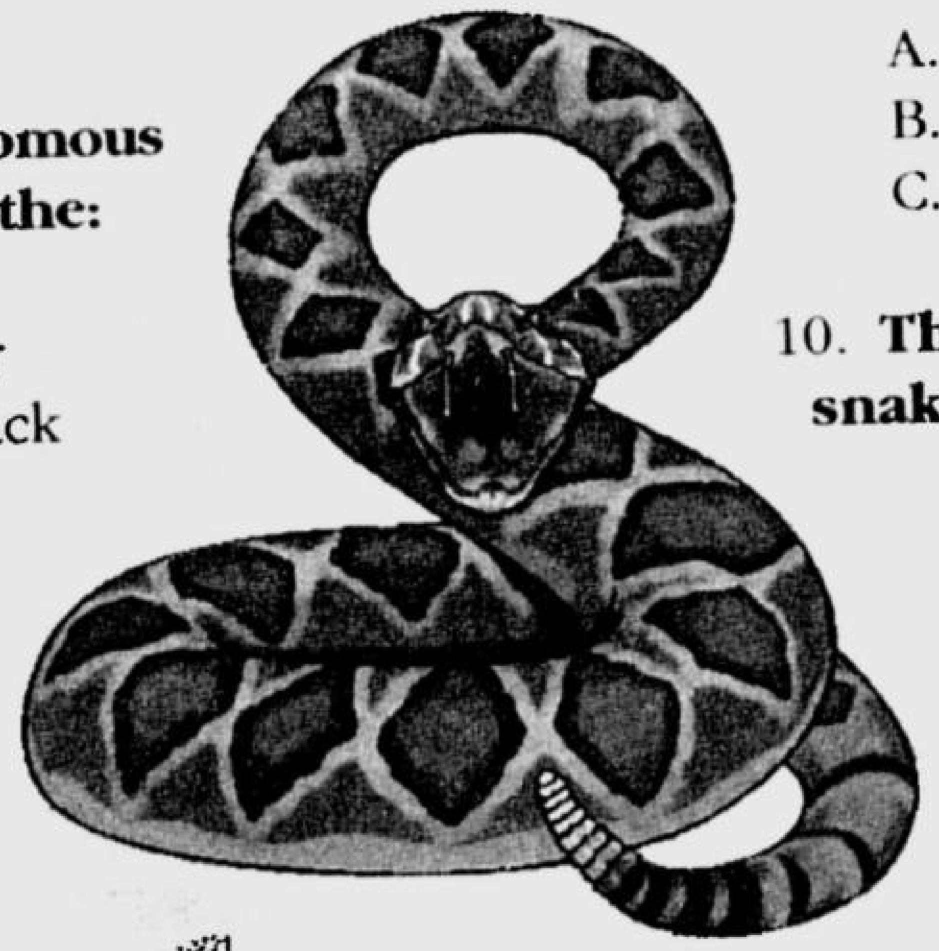
8. **The most venomous land snake is the:**

X. tiger snake
Y. fierce snake
Z. death adder



9. **The snake with the longest fangs (2 in.) is the:**

A. king cobra
B. boomslang
C. gaboon viper



10. **The fastest-moving land snake (up to 19 kph) is the:**

X. black mamba
Y. sidewinder
Z. bushmaster

11. **The oldest known snake (40 years) was a/an:**

A. anaconda
B. boa constrictor
C. asp

12. **The country with the highest incidence of snakebite deaths (800 people annually) is:**

X. Brazil
Y. Australia
Z. Sri Lanka

Answers:

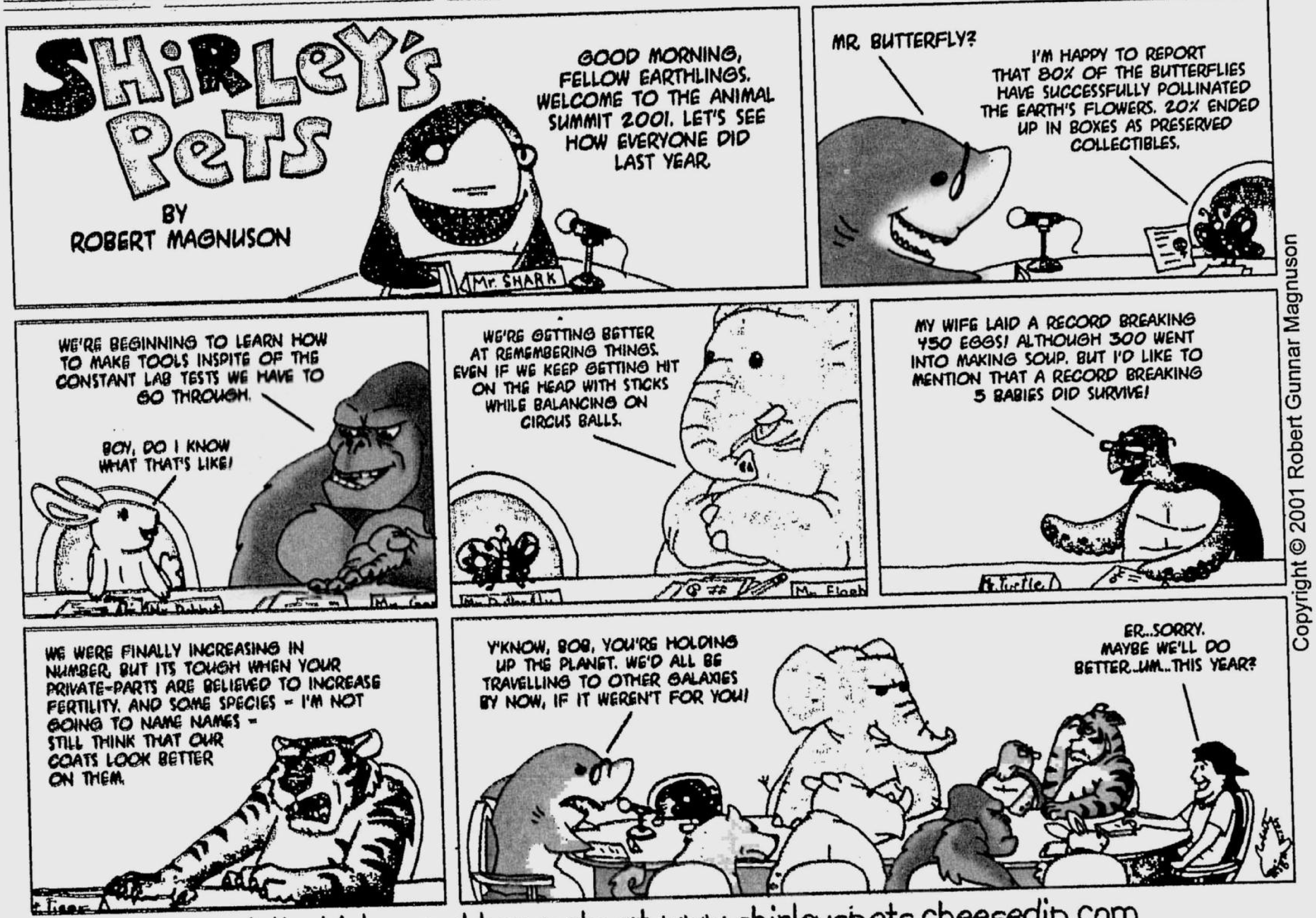
1. C
2. X
3. C
4. X
5. B
6. X
7. C
8. Y
9. C
10. X
11. B
12. Z

Ratings:

11 - 12
Super (snake) brain

9 - 10
Excellent

6 - 8
Good


SHiRLeY's PeTS
BY ROBERT MAGNUSON
GOOD MORNING, FELLOW EARTHLINGS. WELCOME TO THE ANIMAL SUMMIT 2001. LET'S SEE HOW EVERYONE DID LAST YEAR.
Mr. SHARK
MR. BUTTERFLY?
I'M HAPPY TO REPORT THAT 80% OF THE BUTTERFLIES HAVE SUCCESSFULLY POLLINATED THE EARTH'S FLOWERS. 20% ENDED UP IN BOXES AS PRESERVED COLLECTIBLES.
WE'RE BEGINNING TO LEARN HOW TO MAKE TOOLS INSPITE OF THE CONSTANT LAB TESTS WE HAVE TO GO THROUGH.
BOY, DO I KNOW WHAT THAT'S LIKE!
WE'RE GETTING BETTER AT REMEMBERING THINGS. EVEN IF WE KEEP GETTING HIT ON THE HEAD WITH STICKS WHILE BALANCING ON CIRCUS BALLS.
MY WIFE LAID A RECORD BREAKING 450 EGGS! ALTHOUGH 300 WENT INTO MAKING SOUP. BUT I'D LIKE TO MENTION THAT A RECORD BREAKING 5 BABIES DID SURVIVE!
Mr. Turtle
WE WERE FINALLY INCREASING IN NUMBER, BUT ITS TOUGH WHEN YOUR PRIVATE-PARTS ARE BELIEVED TO INCREASE FERTILITY. AND SOME SPECIES - I'M NOT GOING TO NAME NAMES - STILL THINK THAT OUR COATS LOOK BETTER ON THEM.
Y'KNOW, BOB, YOU'RE HOLDING UP THE PLANET. WE'D ALL BE TRAVELLING TO OTHER GALAXIES BY NOW, IF IT WEREN'T FOR YOU!
ER...SORRY. MAYBE WE'LL DO BETTER...UM...THIS YEAR?

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visit shirley and her pets at www.shirleyspets.cheesedip.com

2001 Nyaaah!!!

(from page 1)

—***Luis Alfonso Yaptinchay***, *10, Xavier School*

"I want to invent eyeglasses that can see through textiles!"
—***Ma. Margarita Atienza***, *13, St. Scholastica's College*

"I will ride an alligator!"
—***Dominic Paul C. Sy***, *8, Xavier School*

"I will collect all of the dolls in the whole world!"
—***Stephanie Gayle C. Sy,***, *7, Immaculate Conception Academy*

"I want to solve the hardest mathematical problem in the whole world!"
—***Mark Benedict Tan***, *10, Xavier School*

"I will eat dinosaur meat!"

"I want to join all of the organizations in school!"
—***Charles Louie Yu***, *12, Grace Christian High School*

"I want to play billiards. I want to play because I laugh at the way the balls jump around the table."
—***Jimboy Lim***, *7, Siena College Q.C.*

"I would like to go to Pluto. *Wala lang*...I just want to go there."
—*Trina M.,* ***12, Miriam College***

"I would like to meet a real bear because it's big and mean. I would also like to train it because I would like it to protect me from bad people."
—***Andrew Tan***, *10, LaSalle GreenHills*

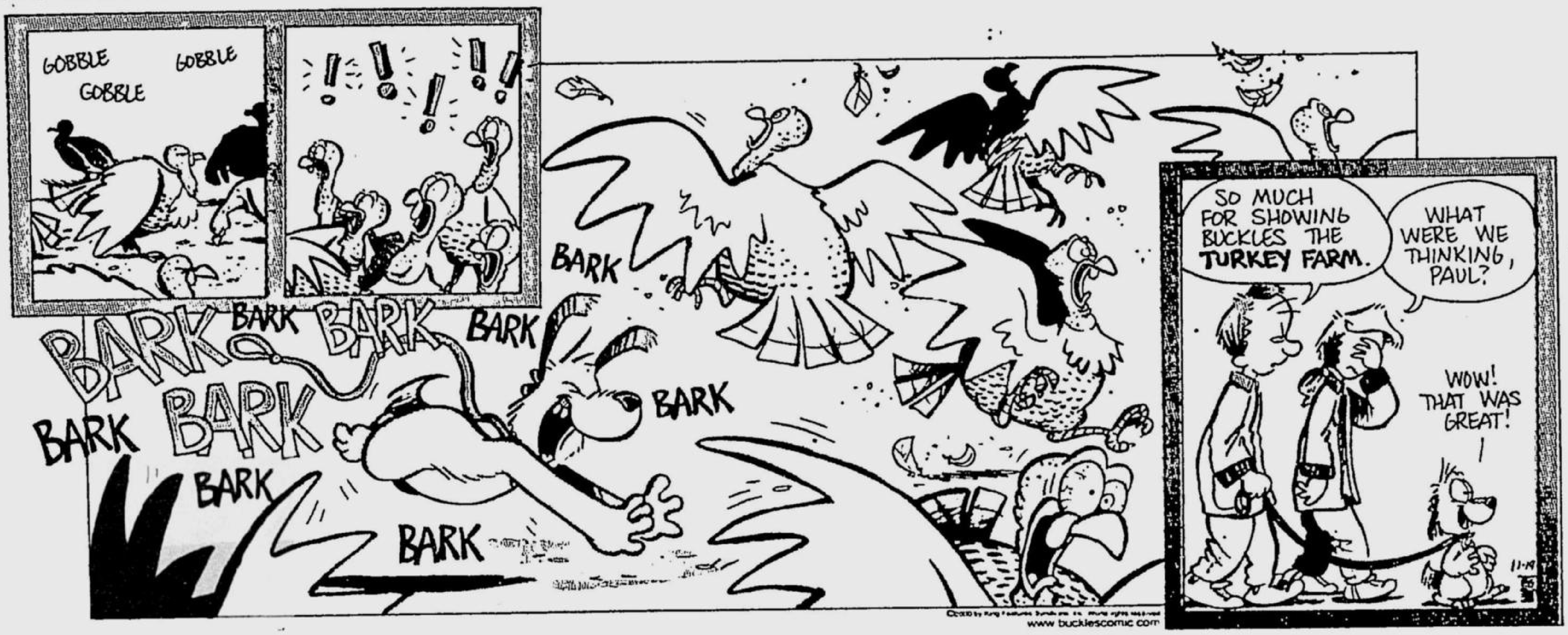
"I would like to make myself a mutant so that with my power, I could conquer the world. I would like to be the king..."
—***Pocholo Gonzales***, *10, LaSalle GreenHills*

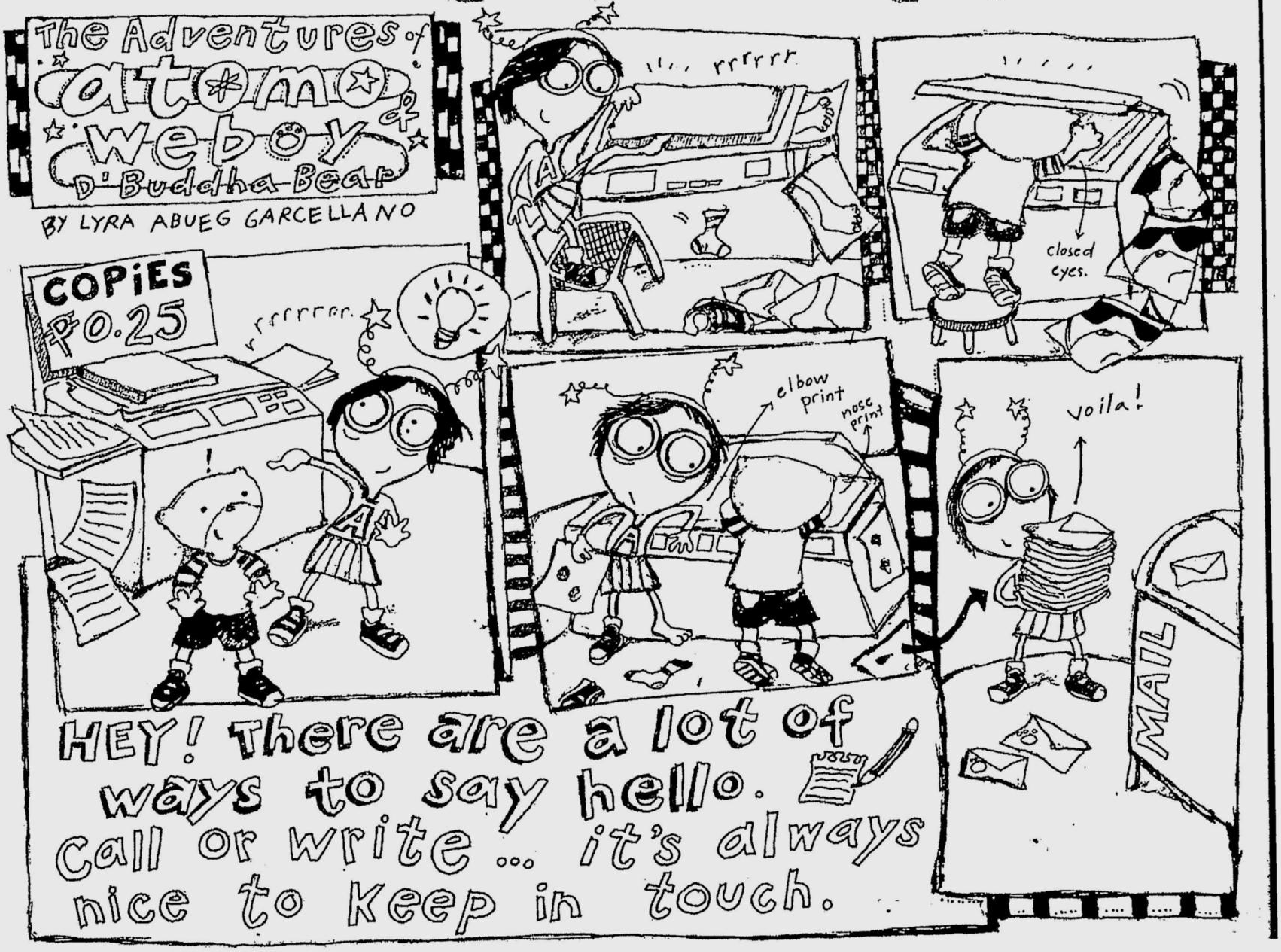
"I would like to have my very own carnival so that my parents will not spend so much money anymore."
—***Pocholo De Guzman***, *10, LaSalle GreenHills*

"Next year?! I can't think of anything beacause this year was already crazy enough!"
—***Kathleen Tiu***, *13, Immaculate Conception Academy*

BUCKLES

BY DAVID GILBERT


GOBBLE
GOBBLE
GOBBLE
! ! ! ! !
BARK BARK BARK BARK BARK BARK BARK BARK BARK BARK
SO MUCH FOR SHOWING BUCKLES THE TURKEY FARM.
WHAT WERE WE THINKING, PAUL?
WOW! THAT WAS GREAT!
11-19
www.bucklescomic.com


The Adventures of atom & weboy D'Buddha Bear
BY LYRA ABUEG GARCELLANO
rrrrrr
closed eyes.
COPIES ₱0.25
rrrrrrr.
!
elbow print
nose print
voila!
MAIL
HEY! There are a lot of ways to say hello. Call or write... it's always nice to keep in touch.